Coughlin Exposed! *Begin John L. Spivak's Articles with This Issue*

NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

December 5, 1939

Collection Box to Stock Market

Charles E. Coughlin's Brokers' Documents Show Auto Holdings

By John L. Spivak

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Between Ourselves

As the auto scene in Detroit grows into even greater national prominence NM will present in next week's installment of the Spivak series the unrevealed background of Silver Charlie Coughlin's anti-labor conspiracies in the motor capital. This article, which will be of vital interest particularly to the Detroit labor movement, will reveal the facts about Coughlin's relations with Henry Ford, his secret meetings with Harry Bennett, chief of Ford espionage, and his union-busting, as well as details of the activities of the radio orator's fascist cronies. Thousands of extra copies of this issue will be distributed in Detroit and other industrial centers. Readers should get in touch with us immediately on orders of this issue for friends. Send us the addresses of ten or more friends and we will mail them the copies at 10 cents each. The $2 subscription for twenty-five weeks of NM still obtains, and special Silver Charlie subscription blanks may be had free for the purpose of soliciting these special subscriptions.

K. P. Aldrich, chief post office inspector, stationed in Washington, D. C., advises NM that he is taking action on the allegation of this magazine that Father Coughlin has violated federal postal laws. Copies of the John L. Spivak evidence on Father Coughlin's activities were presented to the Post Office Department immediately after publication and the editors also offered other documentary material concerning Coughlin. Mr. Aldrich transmitted the evidence to the post office inspector in charge, Chicago, Ill., on whom we are waiting with additional evidence.

How well John L. Spivak's articles are being regarded in Detroit is indicated by the fact that an NM salesman stationed beside a *Social Justice* agent last Saturday at Woodward and State Streets in Detroit was set upon by five Coughlin sluggers, and his magazines torn up. Our representative was arrested for breach of the peace along with one of his assailants. He was replaced immediately and sympathetic passersby brought street sales to a peak at this corner. This week a bigger mobilization of NM salesmen is planned in Detroit for a mass distribution of the facts damning Silver Charlie.

K. C. of New York City writes: "I never write letters but since this is Thanksgiving Day and I was thinking of things to be thankful for, I decided that NM is my first choice. Alter Brody's articles have been the most stimulating, informative, and penetrating I have read anywhere. From his brilliant analysis of Finland in the November 28 issue, I turned to the evaluation of Picasso, the painter of *Guernica,* by Isabel Cooper—and was richly rewarded by the best summing up of the exhibit I've read anywhere. Miss Cooper has expressed what many felt but could not articulate. NM reveals itself to be as revolutionary in its appreciation of art as in its exposition of politics. P.S. I didn't mean to neglect Redfield's cartoon—a masterpiece."

Redfield's admirers seem to constitute 100 percent of NM readers. His cartoon last week has elicited wide comment from all who feel that that "locomotive" is on the right track. We won't tell you the subject of his next cartoon—but save your 15 cents for next week's issue.

NM sent the following telegram to the *Morning Freiheit* on the death of Moissaye J. Olgin: "New Masses staff deeply shocked by death of beloved friend and contributor, Moissaye Olgin. Despite enormous work he performed in the Jewish working class movement, he found time to make a brilliant contribution to the political and cultural education of hundreds of thousands of native American workers and intellectuals among whom his name was widely honored. We join in mourning this great loss.—The Editors."

This is the last warning for visitors to get off the boat. We are now headed for the West Indies. NM's twenty-eighth annual ball at Webster Hall, on Saturday night, December 2, will resemble in decor Marine Square or Frederick Street in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, stomping ground of the Calypsonians, the topical singers of the West Indies. The music for our Night in Trinidad will be shaken out by Gerald Clark's Caribbean Serenaders, featuring the Calypsonian singer, the Duke of Iron. Bill Matons, the Calypso Kid, with Ailes Gilmour, will accompany the Serenaders with West Indian Carnival Dances. For the jive element Dick Carroll's hot band will also be on hand.

Among our guests of honor will be Ruth McKenney, Bruce Minton, William Gropper, Gardner Rea, Mischa Richter, William Blake, John L. Spivak, Harold Rome, A. Redfield, Alvah Bessie, Mike Gold, Marc Blitzstein, Mordecai Bauman. You can still call Jean Stanley at CAledonia 5-3076 for a dollar ticket; at the door admission will be $1.50.

Calypso songs are sung to hot rhumba music; they are intricate, rhymed verses on politics, love, crime, and philosophical matters, often improvised on the spur of the moment. The social songs of the Calypsonians are the most articulate and popular in contemporary music. P.S. There'll be dancing till dawn.

Correction: A typographical error in Isabel Cooper's review of the Picasso exhibition (November 28 issue) resulted in a statement which was the opposite of that intended by the author. The printed version read: "How define his [Picasso's] influence? Sheer impact and prolificity are the answer." Miss Cooper had written: "How define his influence? Sheer impact and prolificity are no answer."

Who's Who

John L. Spivak, whose detective-reporting has brought him nation-wide fame, is the author of several books, the most recent of which is *Honorable Spy.* . . . Frank Goelet is the pen name of a New York newspaperman who has been covering City Hall for many years. . . . Jane Speed de Andreu is a free lance writer now residing in Puerto Rico. . . . John Stuart collaborated with Bruce Minton in writing *Men Who Lead Labor.* . . . Joseph Starobin is one of NM's regular contributors. . . . Ralph Ellison is a young Negro writer.

Flashbacks

France and Germany solemnly signed a "good neighbor" treaty a year ago on December 6, disclaiming all territorial designs on each other. . . . As the unemployed learn that the proposed administration budget provides for increased armaments and decreased relief, they are likely to consider using, once more, the technique by which the idea of federal relief was first effectively presented to Washington. On Dec. 6, 1931, the First National Hunger March, consisting of 1,670 delegates of the unemployed from all over the country, arrived at the nation's capital, demanding relief and unemployment insurance. . . . James B. McNamara, with a longer record of imprisonment than any living labor prisoner, was sentenced for life on Dec. 5, 1911. . . . John Brown, enemy of slavery, was hanged Dec. 2, 1859. . . . On Dec. 2, 1914, Karl Liebknecht, Left Wing Socialist sitting in the German Reichstag, shouted the only "No!" on the vote for the proposed war credits requested by the German imperialists. . . . The assassination Dec. 1, 1934, of Sergei M. Kirov indicated that Trotskyism, losing all mass following in the land of socialism, had resorted to the desperate expedient of terrorism.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXIII DECEMBER 5, 1939 NUMBER 11

Coughlin's Lawyer Speaks

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Silver Charlie Coughlin's stockmarket accounts. Prewitt Semmes, attorney, talks a mouthful. Church funds for political propaganda. Solving the mystery of "Ben Marcin." The trick of switching ownership of profit-making corporations to non-profit-making ones.

I HAD some documents which showed that the Rev. Charles E. Coughlin, the radio priest of Royal Oak, Mich., collected money "to build a new church" and while this money was flowing in from the public he began to play the stockmarket. It was during this same period that Coughlin, in his radio orations, denounced stockmarket gambling as "shooting craps with other people's money." The documents I had also showed that he took some $4,000 of the money sent him by his listeners in response to his appeals for funds to erect "the new church" and loaned it to his father, Thomas J. Coughlin, who used it to open a little business.

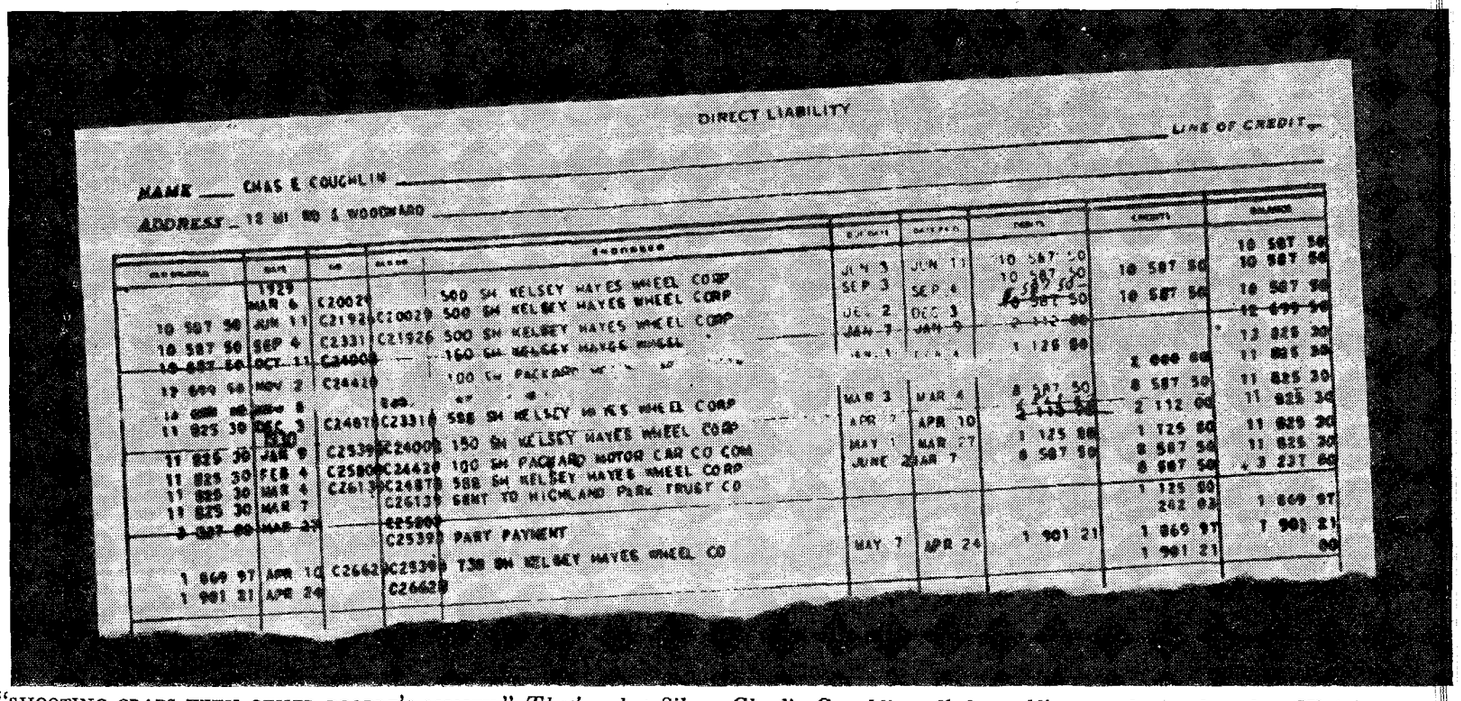
I tried several times to see Coughlin to ask for an explanation, if any, as to where he got the money to play the stockmarket and where he got the legal authority to collect money from the public to build a church and loan it to his father. There were a number of questions I wanted to ask—about secret conferences he had with Nazi agents and propagandists, about meetings with Henry Ford and Harry Bennett, head of Ford's secret service, while he was busy trying to split the ranks of organized labor in the automobile industry. Each time I was told that he was too busy. After the interview I had with Prewitt Semmes, Coughlin's attorney in Detroit, with which I deal in this article, Semmes agreed that some of my questions could best be answered by Coughlin himself. The radio priest, however, still refused to see me even after his attorney urged him to. Silver Charlie did not want to talk about where he got the money for his market flyers.

LEAGUE OF THE LITTLE FLOWER

Some ten years ago Charles E. Coughlin had already started broadcasting in a modest way as the voice of the "Golden Hour of the Little Flower." Money to support his religious sermons over the air came in response to his appeals. The priest saw possibilities and promptly organized a "League of the Little Flower," which he incorporated. (This was the predecessor to the present Radio League of the Little Flower, whose "take" from the public has been around one million dollars to date.) The League of the Little Flower was incorporated on Jan. 10, 1928, to function for thirty years. The specific purposes for which the state of Michigan permitted it to collect money from the public were unmistakably set forth in the Articles of Association as follows:

> To obtain funds, which will be donated toward defraying the expenses of operating the Parish Shrine of the Little Flower, at Woodward Ave. and 12 Mile Rd., Detroit, Mich.; and further, to obtain funds which will be donated toward the building of a new church in said parish.

Coughlin, even at that time, had already learned a trick or two about how the big boys in the financial world operate, for he



"SHOOTING CRAPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY." *That's what Silver Charlie Coughlin called gambling on the stockmarket. While he was thus denouncing these stockmarket gamblers, he was playing the market heavily himself. The "radio priest," a poor man, started "shooting craps with other people's money," started to gamble on the market shortly after the public began to send him money "to build a new church," in response to his fervent and pious appeals.*

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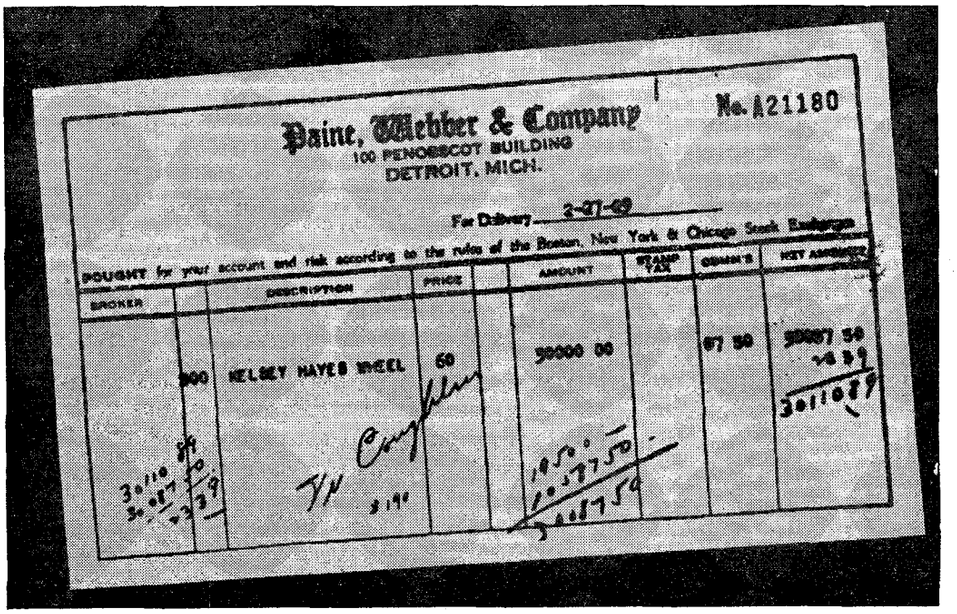
sewed up his new corporation in the hands of a little trio right from the start by providing in the Articles of Association that "Officers shall be chosen by the original organizers or their successors in office." This outfit was going to collect money and he wanted to be sure no one else horned in on it. The original incorporators and officers were the Rev. Charles E. Coughlin, Frank L. Wood, and Eugenia B. Burke. Almost invariably, directors and officers of Coughlin corporations were, and still are, Coughlin and a couple of his underpaid stenographers.

The priest's appeals over the small network of stations for funds "to build a new church" met so encouraging a response that he decided to branch out. First, however, it was necessary to dissolve the already established corporation, so on July 19, 1930, he called in two of his secretaries, Amy Collins and Eugenia Burke (Frank L. Wood was eased out of the picture and Amy took over the finances, which she has been handling ever since). At this meeting Coughlin and his two employees decided that thirty years was an awfully long time. Without any qualms of conscience they cut the life of the corporation to two years and seven months, thus bringing about its demise on Aug. 10, 1930. Amy, who was subsequently to hold 500,000 ounces of silver in her name for the priest while he was trying to raise the price of the metal by his radio broadcasts, wrote to John S. Haggerty, Michigan's secretary of state, notifying him that the corporation had gone out of business. The records, she added blandly, were at 1705 Fairlawn Ave., Royal Oak—which happened to be her home.

So far as the state of Michigan was concerned, that was that. No one asked Coughlin or his secretaries what they did with the money collected from the public. That, I learned, is one of the beauties of organizing a non-profit-making corporation in the state of Michigan. All you have to do is announce that it's for a religious, patriotic, or some other high sounding purpose, pay a couple of bucks to register your outfit, and you may legally rake in the shekels from anyone you can persuade to shell out. What you do with the dough after you get it seems to be your own business; nobody bothers you.



FROM THE POOR BOX TO THE BROKER. *While Silver Charlie, under his priest's oath of poverty, was collecting money "to build a new church," he suddenly got enough to buy $30,000 of stock on the stockmarket which he (at the same time) denounced over the air.*

When the League of the Little Flower went out of existence it had $3,297.32 in a commercial bank, $27,423.91 in a savings account, and about $5,000 worth of office and household furniture. The household furniture was worth over $1,000, and why the League needed $1,000 worth of household furniture to build a church I never could figure out. It was one of the questions I wanted to ask the radio priest. All in all, when Coughlin and his two employees closed shop on the League of the Little Flower they had almost $31,000 in the sock which they had collected from the public.

The question I particularly wanted to ask Coughlin was how come money from the League's bank account was used to meet payments on his stockmarket gambling accounts. I was under the impression, from the specified purposes for which the state permitted him to collect money, that it was to maintain his church and to help build a new one, and for no other purpose. I wanted to ask him also just what he meant when, in his radio broadcasts at this same period, he called stockmarket gambling "shooting craps with other people's money."

FANCY CRAPS-SHOOTING

Let me illustrate. About a year after the priest started to collect for the new church he bought (on Feb. 27, 1929) five hundred shares of Kelsey Hayes Wheel for $30,000 at $60 a share through Paine, Webber & Co., brokers with offices in the Penobscot Building, Detroit. I publish a couple of illustrations from his stockmarket accounts which give an idea of the extent of his "shooting craps with other people's money."

However, as I have already said, Coughlin

What Spivak Has Told

IN HIS first two articles, John L. Spivak laid bare the incorporated finaglings of the Radio League of the Little Flower, Inc., the National Union for Social Justice, Inc., Social Justice Publishing Co., Inc., the Social Justice Poor Society, Inc., and the various employees who act as dummies for the private and public ventures of "Silver Charlie" Coughlin.

In the first article (which appeared November 21) the official statement of the National Union for Social Justice (incorporated as a political organization) was reproduced, showing that $99,192.17 was loaned this political organization by the Radio League of the Little Flower, Inc., and $2,000 was loaned for political purposes by Sainte Therese Parish, Royal Oak. Thus devout Catholics supporting their church might find their contributions used to attack the presidential candidate of the United States for whom they were voting.

Charles E. Coughlin is shown to be the only incorporator and stockholder of "Social Justice" magazine.

The second article (which appeared November 28) showed the corporation reports of Social Justice Publishing Co., Inc., revealing the silent partner of "Silver Charlie": Edward Kinsky of New York. It revealed the switch of ownership (on paper) of the magazine to the Social Justice Poor Society, a non-profit charitable organization which shows no record of performing any work of charity, except holding the stock of Social Justice Publishing Co.

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refused to see me. The president of the Radio League of the Little Flower, who operates at the present time out of the offices of a broker interested in money speculation, refused to explain what the Radio League did with the million dollars it collected to date when I called upon him. The president of this money-raising outfit, Mr. Edward Kinsky, referred me to his attorney, Prewitt Semmes of Milburn & Semmes. I was quite impressed with the fact that the heads of these corporations collecting money from the public didn't like to tell what they did with it. Their activities were veiled in mystery so, since Silver Charlie wouldn't see me, and the president of the money-collecting Radio League wouldn't talk, I called upon their attorney.

Semmes is the motion picture type of a successful lawyer, a man in the prime of life, meticulously dressed, cool and suave. He's a corporation lawyer who averages about $50,000 a year.

"I'll be glad to answer any questions," he said amiably, and when I started to take notes, he suggested: "Why not let me call in my secretary? We'll have an exact record of the questions and answers. Then at the end of the interview you can initial my copy and I'll initial yours." This was quite agreeable, and with his secretary making an exact record of the interview I began by asking him who owned *Social Justice* magazine.

RECORDS AT THE SHRINE

"All of the stock of Social Justice Publishing Co. was originally owned by the Radio League of the Little Flower," he said. "There were ten shares involved. These ten were the only ones ever issued out of five hundred authorized."

"When did the Radio League acquire ownership of these controlling ten shares?"

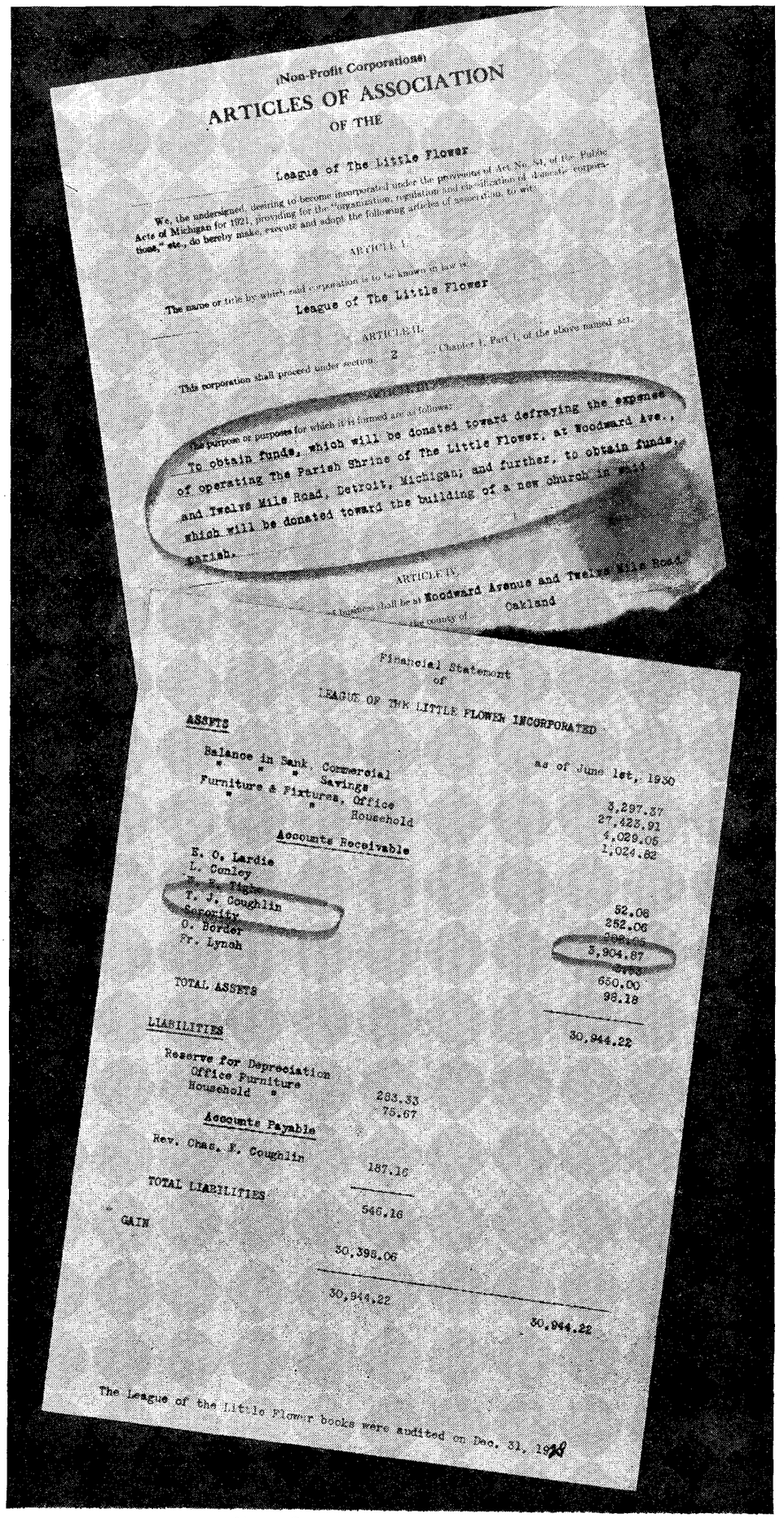
Semmes called for the *Social Justice* and Radio League files which he studied carefully.

"I don't seem to have it here," he said finally. "I'll have to get that for you."

He instructed his secretary to get Miss (Eugenia B.) Burke at the Shrine and asked her to get the information from the records. Several times during the interview Semmes referred to the records at the Shrine. The date I had asked about was Feb. 28, 1936, but I was less interested in that than where the records were kept. Subsequently, even though Semmes had called the Shrine for the records in my presence, both he and Coughlin denied that the records of this privately owned publishing company were kept at the tax-exempt church.

Semmes showed the stenographic notes to Coughlin the day after the interview and the priest must have hit the ceiling at his lawyer's admissions, for on Nov. 8, 1939, the lawyer sent me a five page letter in which he said:

> Father Coughlin did not receive until today the copy of the answers I gave to your questions on Monday, November 6. He got the wrong impression from this interview and if he did it may be that others would also. . . .
>
> The calls (to Social Justice Publishing Co.) do ot go through the switchboard at the Shrine office.



(Non-Profit Corporations)

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

OF THE

League of The Little Flower

We, the undersigned, desiring to become incorporated under the provisions of Act No. 84, of the Public Acts of Michigan for 1921, providing for the "organization, regulation and dissolution of domestic corporations," etc., do hereby make, execute and adopt the following articles of association, to wit:

ARTICLE I.

The name or title by which said corporation is to be known in law is

League of The Little Flower

ARTICLE II.

This corporation shall proceed under section 2 Chapter 1, Part 1, of the above named act.

ARTICLE III.

The purpose or purposes for which it is formed are as follows:

To obtain funds, which will be donated toward defraying the expense of operating The Parish Shrine of The Little Flower, at Woodward Ave., and Twelve Mile Road, Detroit, Michigan; and further, to obtain funds, which will be donated toward the building of a new church in this parish.

ARTICLE IV.

The business shall be at Woodward Avenue and Twelve Mile Road, in the county of Oakland

Financial Statement
of
LEAGUE OF THE LITTLE FLOWER INCORPORATED

ASSETS — as of June 1st, 1930

Balance in Bank, Commercial	3,297.37
" " Savings	27,425.91
Furniture & Fixtures, Office	4,029.05
" Household	1,024.82
Accounts Receivable	
E. C. Lardie	52.06
L. Conley	262.06
[illegible]	[illegible]
T. J. Coughlin	3,904.87
[illegible]	[illegible]
C. Border	550.00
Fr. Lynch	98.18
TOTAL ASSETS	30,944.22

LIABILITIES

Reserve for Depreciation	
Office Furniture	283.33
Household "	75.67
Accounts Payable	
Rev. Chas. E. Coughlin	187.16
TOTAL LIABILITIES	546.16
GAIN	30,398.06
	30,944.22
	30,944.22

The League of the Little Flower books were audited on Dec. 31, 1929

A LITTLE HELP TO PAPA. *Silver Charlie's League was given permission to raise money to build a new church—not to lend $4,000 of monies collected to his father. Papa went into business with the dough.*

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(2) The books and records, including financial records of Social Justice Publishing Co., are also kept at the Woodward Avenue office of Social Justice Publishing Co. and not at the Shrine.

This letter was obviously written at Coughlin's insistence, for not only had Semmes admitted in the interview that records are at the Shrine, but I had official documents which gave the tax-exempt church as the address for the private publishing business.

WHO HIS CLIENTS ARE

As the interview progressed I found that Semmes, who represented not only Silver Charlie but Social Justice Publishing Co. and its officers, did not even know the names of these clients whom he represented. He had to telephone to the Shrine repeatedly to get them. When he got the official records they showed that the ten shares of stock, as I reported in my last article, were shifted about from Coughlin to the Radio League to Walter Baertschi to the Social Justice Poor Society, Inc. He became a little uncomfortable as the interview touched on delicate aspects of Coughlin's activities, and went into another room to call the priest. When he returned he laughed and said Coughlin had advised him to throw me out.

"But I'll use my own judgment on it," he concluded.

"I'm glad to hear it," I said, "because there are a lot of questions I want to ask. For instance, does Social Justice Publishing Co., as a profit-making corporation, pay an income tax?"

"Oh, sure."

"Could you tell me how much?"

"I don't know that. I don't make up the tax returns."

"You would have those records at the Shrine?"

"Yes, at the office."

The words slipped out of his mouth apparently before he realized it. He had attached no particular significance to his earlier phone calls to the Shrine for the records, but with this statement he seemed to realize what I was driving at and he added hastily: "I don't think—well, I'm not sure that *Social Justice* office is at the Shrine. It might be at 13 Mile Rd. and Woodward. Anyway, that's where the figures are available. One place or the other."

"SOCIAL JUSTICE" OFFICES

"What's the address and number of the offices at 13 Mile Rd. and Woodward?"

"I don't know the number. It's on Woodward Ave. at about 13 Mile Rd."

"I mean, is there a sign so that you know where the offices are?"

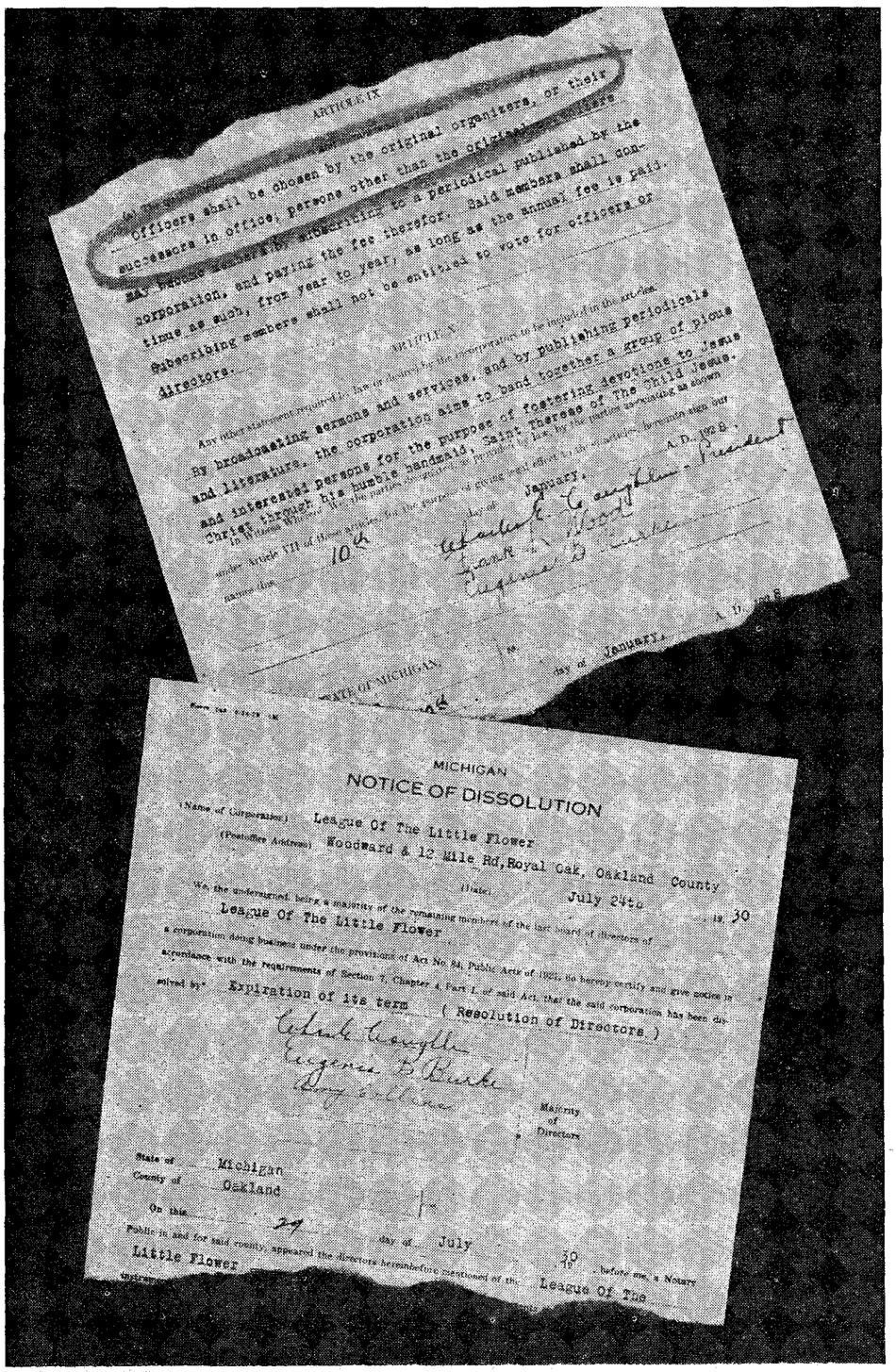
"No. It's just a dwelling house. It looks just like an ordinary house. There are no signs to advertise what it is. I imagine it is listed in the telephone book."

"Shall we look?" I suggested. I had already looked, and knew it was not in the phone book. There was a lot of mystery about the location of the publishing office, because the *Social Justice* owners had told the archbishop of Detroit that the magazine is not and never was an organ of the Catholic Church. It's a private business operated for profit which would brook no interference from the church. That being the case, it wouldn't look very nice if it came out that the private business was surreptitiously using a tax-exempt church in which to operate.

Semmes turned the pages of the telephone book, frowned, and finally said, "It's not listed."

"You mean this big national publishing business doesn't have a telephone at its offices?"

"Oh, no," he said quickly. "I mean that the


ARTICLE IX
officers shall be chosen by the original organizers, or their
successors in office; persons other than the original members
corporation, and paying the fee therefor. Said members shall con-
time as such, from year to year, as long as the annual fee is paid.
subscribing members shall not be entitled to vote for officers or
directors.
By broadcasting sermons and services, and by publishing periodicals
and literature, the corporation aims to band together a group of pious
and interested persons for the purpose of fostering devotion to Jesus
Christ through His humble handmaid, Saint Therese of The Child Jesus.
January,
MICHIGAN
NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION
League Of The Little Flower
Woodward & 12 Mile Rd, Royal Oak, Oakland County
July 24th
League Of The Little Flower
Expiration of its term
(Resolution of Directors)
Eugene B. Burke
Michigan
Oakland
July
Little Flower
League Of The

SERVED UP. *The League of the Little Flower, Inc., predecessor of the Radio League of the Little Flower, Inc., set out to collect money from the public and didn't want anyone else to horn in on it. Article IX of the incorporation papers provided that only the original organizers or their successors in office could choose officers. (Below) The famous trio: Coughlin to Burke to Collins (treasurer) dissolve the League before starting on a more ambitious plan.*

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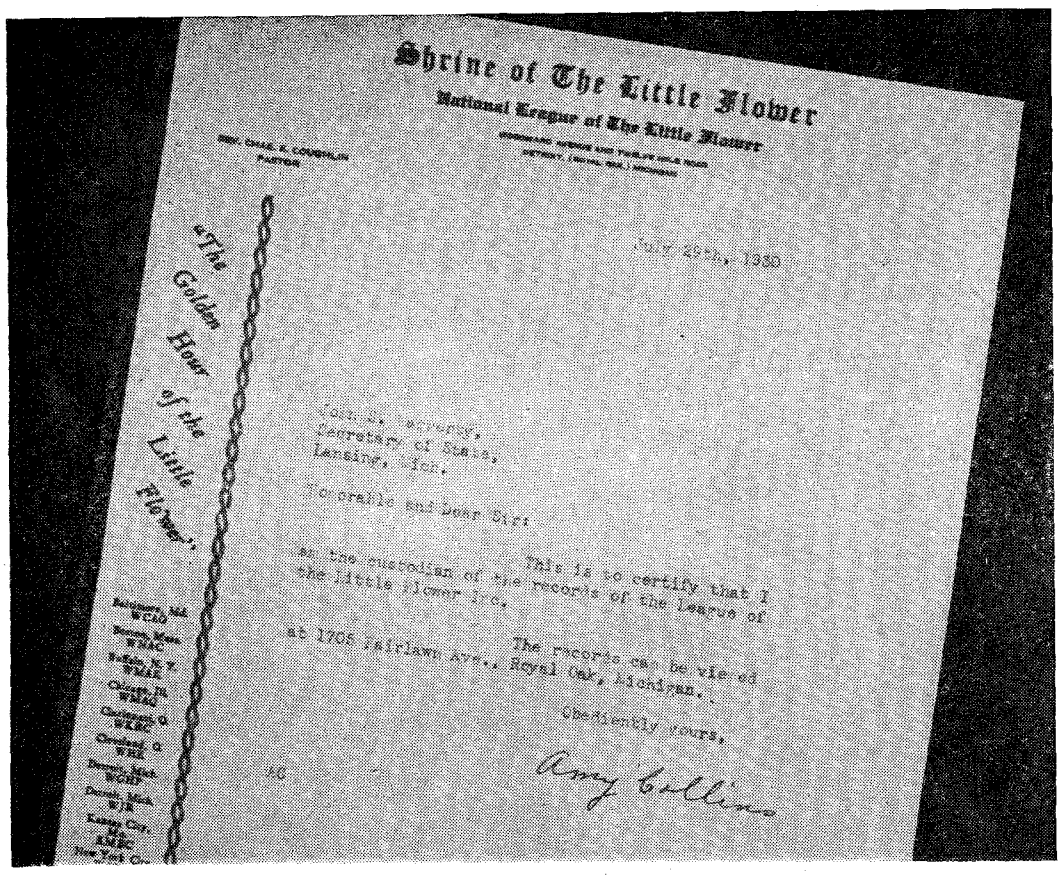
Shrine of The Little Flower
National League of The Little Flower
"The Golden Hour of the Little Flower"
Royal Oak, Mich.
Secretary of State,
Lansing, Mich.
Gentlemen and Dear Sirs
This is to certify that I
am the custodian of the records of the League of
the Little Flower Inc.
The records can be viewed
at 1705 Fairlawn Ave., Royal Oak, Michigan.
Cordially yours,
Amy Collins

NICE OF 'EM. *Silver Charlie's secretary writes formally to the state of Michigan after the demise of Coughlin's first big money-raising corporation.*

office at 13 Mile Rd. and Woodward is not listed in here. I mean—to telephone you go through the Shrine. Royal Oak 4122. But the street number of the 13 Mile Rd. and Woodward isn't listed here."

"Just how many houses from the corner is this dwelling house?"

"I don't know," said the attorney for the publishing house whose address he didn't know.

"Have you ever been——"

"Yes," he interrupted before I could finish. "That's where the business office is. That's where the publication is edited. That's where Mr. Schwartz' office is." (E. Perrin Schwartz is editor of *Social Justice.*)

"Are the records kept there, too?"

"No. Not the financial records. They are kept at the Shrine."

"I believe you wrote a letter to the chancellor of the Archdiocese of Detroit that *Social Justice* is not an organ of the Catholic Church."

"That's right," he said cautiously. "It has no connection whatever with it. The publishing company is a profit corporation."

"Why are the records kept at the Shrine, which is a tax-exempt church?"

"They are not kept at the Shrine. They are kept at the business office of the Shrine, which is a small part of the tax-exempt building."

THE RADIO LEAGUE

"Does any part of the Shrine pay taxes?"

"No," he said a trifle irritably.

I saw no further point in following up this angle. The attorney was all too uncomfortably trying to protect his clients, so I went on to the Radio League which owned *Social Justice.*

"Is the Radio League profit-making?" I asked.

"No," he said, beginning to eye me warily.

"Now, if a non-profit-making corporation owns a profit-making corporation like this publishing company, does that exempt the publishing company from taxation?"

"Oh, no," he laughed. "Quite the contrary. Social Justice Publishing Co. isn't exempt at all."

"Would it be legitimate to ask for tax exemption?"

"We wouldn't even suggest it," he said with a motion of his hand as if the matter were too absurd even to be considered. "It wouldn't be allowed. There's no basis for asking it."

"I happen to have a letter," I said, "which Amy Collins wrote to the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Commission asking for tax exemption on the grounds that it's owned by a non-profit-making corporation."

MR. KINSKY

"Now—wait a minute," he said quickly, turning around in his chair. "I haven't gone into the question of unemployment insurance on *Social Justice* and—and those things because—because I haven't been asked. But," he added with a shrug, "I don't know of any basis which would exempt it although I haven't studied it."

"Okay. If you don't know about it, then we can't very well discuss it. But you do know Edward Kinsky, president of the Radio League of the Little Flower who is also the vice president of Social Justice Publishing Co?"

"I don't know if he is," said Mr. Kinsky's attorney, who also represented these two corporations. "I'd have to check it."

"Let's assume that I'm right until you've checked it. Mr. Kinsky told me you're his personal attorney. What's his business?"

"I don't know——"

I began to laugh and Semmes added, "I'm only his attorney on business for Social Justice Publishing Co. and the Radio League. I don't handle his private affairs. I don't know anything about him."

"You didn't even know that he was president and vice president of these two corporations——?"

"I'm having it checked," he said with a frown.

"Do you know Francis Keelon of Keelon & Co?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Kinsky works with Mr. Keelon?"

"I understand he's in his office but I don't know what he does."

"What is Keelon's business?"

"I don't know——" he began. Then he apparently changed his mind and added, "I think he's a trader in commodities."

"At the time the National Union for Social Justice was organized by Father Coughlin, wasn't Keelon interested in the Union Party which tried to put Coughlin's man in the White House?"

Semmes hesitated a moment and then sidestepped the question a bit lamely. "I know he's always friendly to anything Father Coughlin sponsors," he said.

"I NEVER HEARD OF IT"

"Are you familiar with the League of the Little Flower?"

"There isn't any such thing——" he said quickly.

"Not now, but there was."

I explained how the League was established and how it collected money "to build a church," how Silver Charlie used that money to gamble on the stockmarket. Semmes interrupted me in the middle with "I don't know. I never heard of it."

"All right, but you are familiar with the present-day Radio League of the Little Flower which has been collecting money upon assurances that it's a non-political body. Who gave it authority to loan money collected under such promises to a political organization?"

"There is no prohibition against lending it to anyone," he said cynically.

"In your opinion, it's perfectly all right to receive monies through the mails with assurances that it's to be used for a non-political purpose and then loan that money for political purposes?"

"Now——" he said, raising his hand quickly, "you're going beyond asking me for an opinion. I say it undoubtedly has the authority but I wouldn't want to leave the impression that that is what they do, because they don't."

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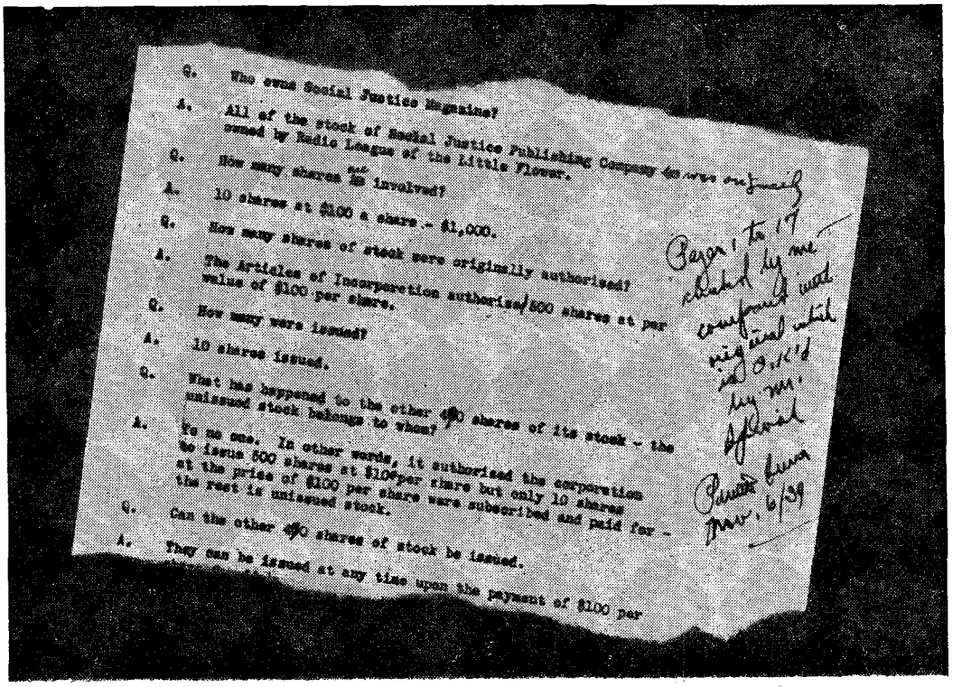


Q. Who owns Social Justice Magazine?

A. All of the stock of Social Justice Publishing Company is owned by Radio League of the Little Flower.

Q. How many shares are involved?

A. 10 shares at $100 a share - $1,000.

Q. How many shares of stock were originally authorized?

A. The Articles of Incorporation authorize 500 shares at par value of $100 per share.

Q. How many were issued?

A. 10 shares issued.

Q. What has happened to the other 490 shares of its stock - the unissued stock belongs to whom?

A. To no one. In other words, it authorized the corporation to issue 500 shares at $100 per share but only 10 shares at the price of $100 per share were subscribed and paid for - the rest is unissued stock.

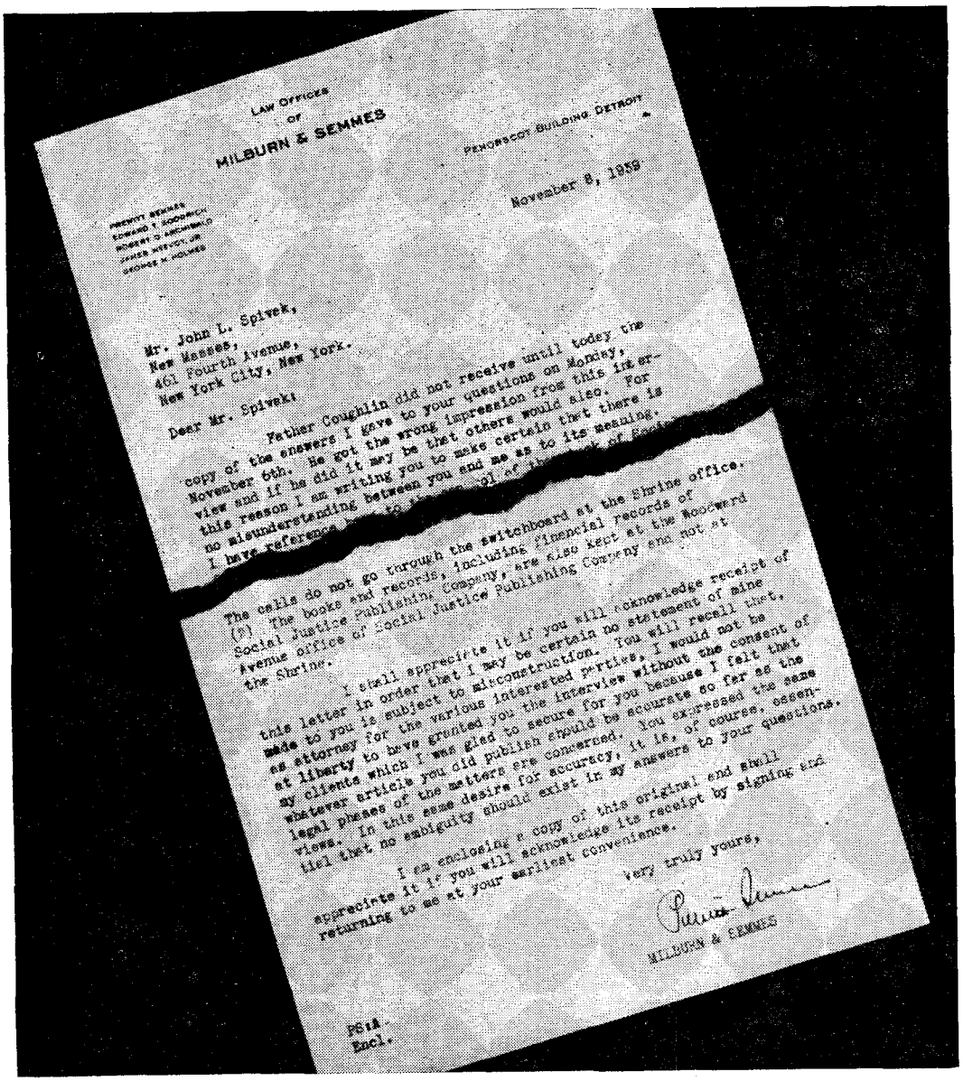
Q. Can the other 490 shares of stock be issued.

A. They can be issued at any time upon the payment of $100 per

Paper to be retained by me and confirmed until signed & O.K'd by Mr. Aylward

Prewitt Semmes Dec. 6/39

BEFORE SILVER CHARLIE SAW IT. *Prewitt Semmes, Coughlin's lawyer, signs the stenographic notes of the Spivak interview, makes a number of admissions and then . . .*



LAW OFFICES OF MILBURN & SEMMES

PENOBSCOT BUILDING DETROIT

November 8, 1939

Mr. John L. Spivak,
New Masses,
461 Fourth Avenue,
New York City, New York.

Dear Mr. Spivak:

Father Coughlin did not receive until today the copy of the answers I gave to your questions on Monday, November 6th. He got the wrong impression from this interview and if he did it may be that others would also. For this reason I am writing you to make certain that there is no misunderstanding between you and me as to its meaning.

The calls do not go through the switchboard at the Shrine office. (2) The books and records, including financial records of Social Justice Publishing Company, are also kept at the Woodward Avenue office of Social Justice Publishing Company and not at the Shrine.

This letter in order that I may be certain no statement of mine made to you is subject to misconstruction. You will recall that, as attorney for the various interested parties, I would not be at liberty to have granted you the interview without the consent of my clients which I was glad to secure for you because I felt that whatever article you did publish should be accurate so far as the legal phases of the matters are concerned. You expressed the same views. In this same desire for accuracy, it is, of course, essential that no ambiguity should exist in my answers to your questions.

I am enclosing a copy of this original and shall appreciate it if you will acknowledge its receipt by signing and returning to me at your earliest convenience.

Very truly yours,

MILBURN & SEMMES

PS:s
Encl.

CHANGES HIS MIND. *Part of the airmail letter Coughlin's lawyer rushed to Spivak after Silver Charlie had read the previously acceptable notes. He worries about NM readers.*

"They didn't loan the money to a political organization?"

"Not so far as I know."

"IT'S A NATURAL THING"

"I believe you drew up the papers for the National Union for Social Justice. Money received by that body was used for political purposes?"

"Yes."

"And a report on its receipts and disbursements had to be turned in to the federal government under the Corrupt Practices Act?"

"That's correct."

"Did you ever see that report?"

"No——"

"I happen to have it. That report shows that it repaid a loan of some $99,000 borrowed from the Radio League of the Little Flower. Now, the Radio League gave the public assurances that its contributions were for a non-political organization——"

"There's no prohibition whatever against a non-profit or charitable organization loaning money to anyone whom the directors see fit," he said quickly.

"I get it, so there's no use going on with that. How about the officers? As a rule all of them seem to be dummy incorporators, as you lawyers call it."

"I should say it's a natural thing," he said smoothly. "It's like the few corporations in which my friends and I are interested. We don't have any outside people in them."

"Then, these various corporations, their directors and trustees, are employees but the control is really in the hands of Father Coughlin?"

"Not legally," he said cautiously, "but—as I say—they naturally—actually—of course, as I say, it would be extraordinary if it were any other way."

NO LAW AGAINST IT

"I guess that's that," I said, motioning to the girl to the effect that the interview was over. There was little more that could be got from the attorney. He had admitted that the private publishing business, which bluntly told the archbishop of Detroit that it is not and never was an organ of the Catholic Church, was using tax-exempt church property in which to conduct its business. The attorney was willing to admit that money collected through the mails upon definite assurances that it was for non-political purposes was nevertheless used for a political organization and viewed it cynically with an attitude of "So what? There's no law against it." The attorney admitted that the various officers and directors of the Coughlin corporations collecting money from the public were "dummies" and the attitude was the same: "So what? We don't want anyone else horning in on it." I had the feeling as the interview ended that perhaps Semmes wasn't so sure of his legal grounds on collecting money through the mails on false promises. Certainly, I was convinced, Silver Charlie's actions were very much like those followed

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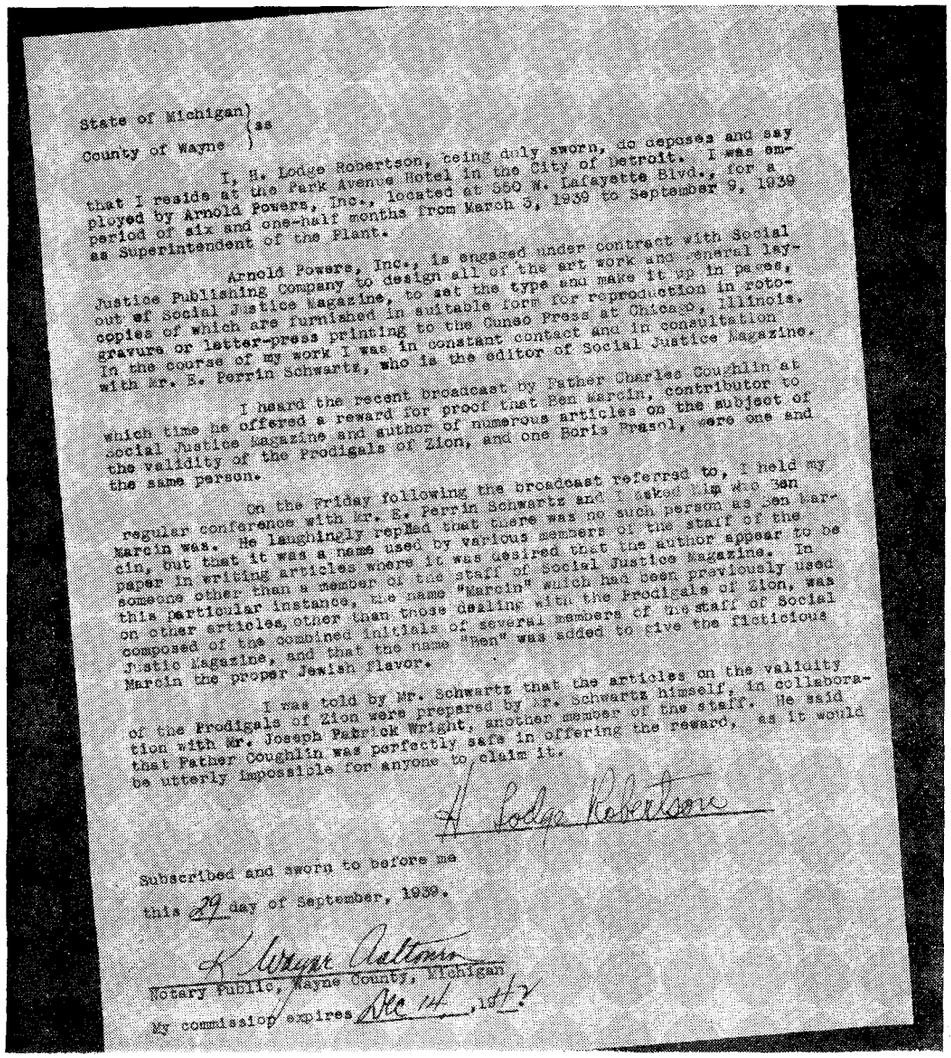

State of Michigan)
County of Wayne) ss

I, H. Lodge Robertson, being duly sworn, do depose and say that I reside at the Park Avenue Hotel in the City of Detroit. I was employed by Arnold Powers, Inc., located at 550 W. Lafayette Blvd., for a period of six and one-half months from March 3, 1939 to September 9, 1939 as Superintendent of the Plant.

Arnold Powers, Inc., is engaged under contract with Social Justice Publishing Company to design all of the art work and general layout of Social Justice Magazine, to set the type and make it up in pages, copies of which are furnished in suitable form for reproduction in rotogravure or letter-press printing to the Cuneo Press at Chicago, Illinois. In the course of my work I was in constant contact and in consultation with Mr. E. Perrin Schwartz, who is the editor of Social Justice Magazine.

I heard the recent broadcast by Father Charles Coughlin at which time he offered a reward for proof that Ben Marcin, contributor to Social Justice Magazine and author of numerous articles on the subject of the validity of the Prodigals of Zion, and one Boris Brasol, were one and the same person.

On the Friday following the broadcast referred to, I held my regular conference with Mr. E. Perrin Schwartz and I asked him who Ben Marcin was. He laughingly replied that there was no such person as Ben Marcin, but that it was a name used by various members of the staff of the paper in writing articles where it was desired that the author appear to be someone other than a member of the staff of Social Justice Magazine. In this particular instance, the name "Marcin" which had been previously used on other articles, other than those dealing with the Prodigals of Zion, was composed of the combined initials of several members of the staff of Social Justice Magazine, and that the name "Ben" was added to give the fictitious Marcin the proper Jewish flavor.

I was told by Mr. Schwartz that the articles on the validity of the Prodigals of Zion were prepared by Mr. Schwartz himself, in collaboration with Mr. Joseph Patrick Wright, another member of the staff. He said that Father Coughlin was perfectly safe in offering the reward, as it would be utterly impossible for anyone to claim it.

H. Lodge Robertson

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this 29 day of September, 1939.

L. Wayne Dattmon
Notary Public, Wayne County, Michigan
My commission expires Dec 14, 1942

JUST A LITTLE PROPAGANDA PHONY. *The affidavit of the foreman of the plant where "Social Justice" magazine is made up discloses that there is no such person as Ben Marcin who signs a lot of the anti-Semitic stuff in Coughlin's magazine. Marcin, the honest radio priest said, is a Jew working for the magazine!*

by racketeers throughout the country who milk the public. If ever I was uncertain that the radio priest was a common racketeer playing on the religious feelings of his listeners, the lawyer's cynical attitude of "So what? There's no law against it," eliminated it. But reputable lawyers I have consulted have a totally different idea about that.

When the girl left to type her notes we continued talking informally about Coughlin. During the conversation I casually asked him if he had ever met Ben Marcin, the reputed Jew who wrote so much of the anti-Semitic stuff in the magazine.

Semmes glanced at me, his eyes twinkling.

"No, I never did," he said with a faint smile. Then, just as casually as I had brought up the name, he asked: "Is there such a person?"

Our eyes met and both of us laughed.

"No," I said. "There isn't. It's a phony."

"Well—" he said quickly—"I wouldn't know anything about that. I wouldn't know anything about that."

The identity of Ben Marcin was one of the points about which I wanted to question the radio priest. When Coughlin launched his anti-Semitic campaign and began to spread propaganda emanating from the Nazi Propaganda Ministry in Germany, "Ben Marcin" made his appearance announcing that he was a Jew. It was under this alleged Jew's signature that some of the most vicious anti-Semitic propaganda appeared in *Social Justice*.

Efforts to locate Ben Marcin were fruitless. Some persons erroneously attributed Marcin's work to Boris Brasol, who helped spread the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" in the United States. Silver Charlie, with his tongue in his cheek, promptly offered a fabulous reward in a broadcast to anyone who could prove that Boris Brasol was Ben Marcin. The priest was safe in offering it, for there is no such person. I have a complete list of all *Social Justice* employees and this name does not appear. I have a complete list of all payments made for articles and no payments were ever made to "Ben Marcin." It's just one of Coughlin's cheerful little propaganda tricks. The stuff signed by the non-existent Ben Marcin is written by E. Perrin Schwartz, editor of the magazine, and Joseph Patrick Wright, one of the editorial employees on the same magazine.

AFFIDAVIT

The story is succinctly told by H. Lodge Robertson, superintendent of the Arnold Powers, Inc., plant in Detroit, where the art work and the layout for *Social Justice* are prepared before the printing of the magazine. Let me quote Mr. Robertson's affidavit which tells it:

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Just an honest fellow—Silver Charlie Coughlin. He called President Roosevelt a liar!

JOHN L. SPIVAK.

Next week: John L. Spivak will disclose Silver Charlie's tieup with Henry Ford, Harry Bennett, head of Ford's secret service, and tell of the large sums of money Homer Martin, the AFL labor "leader," got from mysterious sources, and how the radio priest tried to break the ranks of organized labor in the automobile industry.

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William Gropper

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Imperialism in Puerto Rico

Gigantic fortifications, navy and air bases rise in the natural paradise where two million United States citizens starve. Junking the good neighbor policy.

To most Americans, Puerto Rico has never been much more than a geographical concept, a rather vague one at that. Today Americans must at least become conscious of the location of Puerto Rico. Fifty-three million dollars is being spent by the United States for military construction and fortifications, making it the Gibraltar of the Western Hemisphere. Judging from newspaper items about fortifications, you might imagine that the island of Puerto Rico is also as barren and uninhabited as the Rock of Gibraltar. But do you realize that it has a population of nearly two million human beings living under the most bitter colonial exploitation?

Hear what five thousand unemployed Puerto Rican hunger-marchers said to the new governor, Admiral Leahy, recently: "In all parts of this island, in the houses of our cities, in the homes of our mountains the same cry is heard—the cry of hunger. . . . It cannot be expected of a hungry people to feel the confidence in a government which the international situation today requires, if that government is concerned only with fortifications against a possible enemy and does not attempt to solve the problem of their daily bread. Thus we maintain there can be no national security without social security."

ARMS INSTEAD OF BREAD

The people watch with amazement the tremendous army, navy, and aviation projects being built. The newspapers carry headlines about enormous arms shipments arriving each week, artillery, anti-aircraft, explosives, all kinds of military equipment. Great army planes fly over the island continually. Noisy trucks race up and down the roads. The most conspicuous landmark in San Juan is the big naval radio station. Sinister looking battle ships lie in the harbor. Dredging for submarine bases goes on all the time. Crowded San Juan seems to have more soldiers and sailors than Puerto Ricans on its streets. The most beautiful residential sites are reserved for the families of American officers. Snooty looking American women seem to have "taken over" the best stores.

Altogether, Puerto Rico has become a formidable armed camp, and the people are asking against whom these great guns are to be directed. Whose ships will these submarines sink? On whom will these bombs be dropped? The people may well wonder. For them, not one air-raid protection cellar has been built, not one gas mask has been provided. After becoming the bull's-eye of a military target, they are quietly forgotten.

Puerto Rico is not a new disgrace to the United States, but one of forty years' standing. During the height of prosperity in America, the former governor, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., wrote as follows:

> Riding through the hills, I have stopped at farm after farm where lean, underfed women and sickly men repeated again and again the same story—little food and no opportunity to get more.
>
> From these hills the people have streamed into the coastal towns, increasing the already severe unemployment situation there. Housing facilities, of course, are woefully inadequate. Six or seven people sometimes live in one small room. In some of the poorer quarters I have seen as many as ten housed in a makeshift board room not more than twelve feet square. Of course, disease has spread, for living conditions of this sort always beget disease. . . .
>
> In the last six weeks I have traveled all over the island, I have been through school after school, I have seen hundreds of thousands of children, and I write now not what I have heard or read, but what I have seen with my own eyes. I have seen mothers carrying babies who were little skeletons. I have watched in a classroom thin, pallid little boys and girls trying to spur their brains to action when their little bodies were underfed. I have seen them trying to study on only one scanty meal a day, a meal of a few beans and rice. I have looked into the kitchens of houses where a handful of beans and a few plantains were the fare of the entire family. . . .
>
> We were and are a prey to disease of many kinds. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1929, 4,442 of our people died from tuberculosis. Our death rate from this disease was higher than that of any other place in the Western Hemisphere, and four and a half times the death rate of continental United States. Our death rate from malaria was two and a half times the rate of continental United States. Phrasing it differently, some 35,000 people in our island are now suffering from tuberculosis, some 200,000 from malaria and some 600,000 from hookworm. Besides hookworm there are a great number of other intestinal parasites that cause great damage. . . .
>
> This condition is all the more deplorable because the climate here is exceptionally healthy. We have a moderate temperature varying very little during the year. We have an abundance of sunshine. The trade winds blow through the majority of the year. We should be nearly free from such plagues as tuberculosis.

Remember what happened to the standard of living from 1929 to 1939 in the United States, picture the same catastrophe starting from a level already below zero: then perhaps you will appreciate conditions in Puerto Rico today. According to PRRA (Puerto Rican Reconstruction Administration), 85 percent of the population are in need of aid. Sixty-five percent are unemployed at least nine months of the year and 50 percent are regularly and permanently unemployed. There is no direct cash relief of any sort—city, insular, or federal. Except in the city of San Juan, the PRRA and WPA employ only a comparatively small percentage on construction. The rest simply starve. In the sugar industry wages run around 13 cents an hour. This is seasonal work, so that sugar workers average around $75 a year. Needlework for women runs around 5 cents an hour. White collar employees in the Banco Popular earn salaries of $25 a month. Skilled workers, such as printers and building trade workers, make six to eight dollars a week. The unemployed half of the population exist on the support of workers earning such wages!

LIVING COSTS

Reading these figures you may reflect that the cost of living in Puerto Rico must be very low. The fact is: *the cost of living in Puerto Rico is the highest in the world.* Practically everything that people consume is imported from the United States. As a colony Puerto Rico is at the mercy of American monopolies and the American tariff. The sugar companies have taken practically all of the coastal and valley lands: eggs, butter, vegetables, meat, and fruit are largely imported. The tariff forces Puerto Rico to buy from the United States, the highest market in the world, or pay the equivalent in customs. Rice, as in China the chief food of the people, is imported. Costing the people $4,000,000 per year, rice may be bought for $2,000,000 on the open market. Apart from the tariff, the American monopoly-controlled shipping lines contribute toward making the cost of living the highest in the world. Puerto Rico is compelled by law to trade with the United States only in American ships, at exorbitant freight charges. For example, the rate for canned goods to Puerto Rico is 33 cents per hundredweight a thousand miles, while Chile pays 20 cents and Rio de Janeiro pays only 15 cents. War in Europe has increased the price of food still further. Local profiteers are stocking up garages with food, in anticipation of even higher prices.

Equally disastrous are the effects of the tariff laws on native industry which is prevented from developing the home market. Almost everything a human being must consume, including his clothes, the material of which his house is built, even his coffin, is imported. Here again freight rates add to prices, already high. Sears, Roebuck sells a gas stove for $79 in the United States. In Puerto Rico it costs $112. This is the usual rate of additional charge on manufactured goods.

Take this cost of living together with the 50 percent unemployment and the $75 a year wages and you begin to get a picture of what life is like. In the United States 30 percent of the worker's income is spent on food, 70 percent on other wants. In Asia 90 percent must be spent on food and only 10 percent remains; but in Puerto Rico 94 percent goes for food!

The tragic condition of the people is in

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strange contrast to the incomparable beauty and color of the island, which even imperialism cannot destroy. The Institute of Tourism (maintained by a tax on the people's salt) puts up signs in the buses and store windows saying to the people, "Be nice to the tourists, you also are a part of the scenery." But walking through the crowded streets, looking into the faces of the people, is a terrible experience: gaunt and ravaged by disease, toothless, hunger-scarred faces; girls with their beauty gone at twenty, young people old at twenty-five. Every kind of deformity and illness can be seen on the streets. Half the population are said to be infected with tropical parasites, anemia, tuberculosis, malaria, hookworm, and syphilis.

Huts, far worse than the sharecropper cabins of the South, are crowded together in swamps and garbage dumps. More dreadful yet are the cities, some dating back to the 1500's—now crawling gutters of filth, misery, and disease. Their narrow streets literally swarm with naked children and barefoot, ragged men and women. Tenement houses, like stinking rabbit warrens, are too crowded and dirty for human habitation. One million, eight hundred thousand people are living on a piece of land ninety-five miles long and thirty-five miles wide. That means 529 people to a square mile, in an agricultural country. Compare this with the American population figure of fifty per square mile, and again you will see that Puerto Rican "citizens" are living under conditions more usually identified with China than the United States. Overpopulation is not the cause of Puerto Rican misery. Were the process of industrialization permitted, "overpopulation" would not be a problem, any more than it is in the state of Connecticut which has the same population density.

Colonial domination includes the bitterly hated cultural oppression. The honor and dignity of Puerto Rican culture is continually flaunted, degraded, and destroyed by the American school system, which from the third grade on compels all subjects to be taught in the English language, but with Puerto Rican money!

AN AID TO WORLD REACTION

If American progressives have been guilty of neglecting Puerto Rico, its condition has not been overlooked by world reactionaries. Hitler uses Puerto Rico as an argument to discredit American democracy. In South America fascists and fifth-column elements contrast the condition of Puerto Ricans with the pretensions of the good neighbor policy. The wife of Albizu Campos, Puerto Rican nationalist leader now serving a ten year sentence in Atlanta for "sedition," was toured through South America to discredit the program of the Lima conference.

Progressives and labor forces in America may well criticize themselves for their neglect and ignorance of Puerto Rico. It is high time that the CIO recognized its responsibilities and reached out a helping hand to its colonial brothers. Except in the maritime field the CIO has not yet arrived, but the situation of the labor movement makes assistance imperative.

The old "Federation Libre," affiliated to the AFL, is a dead weight on labor. Its leaders are corrupted by the monopolies and politicians. They do little but strangle the organization of workers. They fought against a wages-and-hours law for Puerto Rico and now they are trying vigorously to amend it to exempt the island. In the political field they consistently support reaction against progress. In New York, in 1937, they supported Tammany-man Lanzetta and fought Vito Marcantonio. As a result their membership has dwindled to less than half its former size. Puerto Rico does not have that aristocracy of labor on which the Federation Libre can base its class collaboration policy, as does the AFL in the United States.

PROGRESSIVE UNIONS

But the needle, sugar, transport workers, the agricultural and waterfront workers are crying for organization and leadership. A young and struggling trade union center, the "Comite Progresista de Organizacion Sindical," is being organized. Its main activity at this time is the fight for the enforcement of the wages-and-hours law. Seldom have wages met the legal standard of 25 cents an hour; local authorities are not interested in seeing the law enforced. These young progressive unions are doing a historic thing for Puerto Rican labor, taking the lawbreaking employers to court, winning back pay and higher wages in many industries.

The Communist Party of Puerto Rico, alone, is active on all fronts, organizing and educating the people. This tiny but heroic party is helping to build a progressive labor movement, organizing the unemployed for relief and social security, fighting for the national dignity of Puerto Rico. The party is young, only five years old last September, but it is educating leaders within its ranks who will be equal to the times. The Puerto Rican party, an affiliate of the Communist International, carries on all its work on a budget of less than $300 a month. It keeps fifteen full time organizers in the field, has public headquarters in eleven cities of the island, as well as a center in San Juan, and issues a weekly paper and a trade union journal. The members of the Central Committee live in the headquarters on a food allowance of 10 cents a day, which means a diet of beans and rice, bread and coffee for fifteen hours of work each day. Its one-leaf newspaper, *La Verdad,* issued weekly since the imperialist war was declared, bears on its masthead the quotation from Puerto Rico's famous statesman Hostos, "Inevitably, there will arrive a moment in the political life of America, when the clamor of the island will coincide with some great national emergency of the United States, and the strong will hear the weak."

JANE SPEED DE ANDREU.

News Bulletin

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8 AM

"There is no new French communique.
In well informed circles they say
Trade talks may soon be under way,
But we cannot yet ascertain whose.
The Council of War has conferred.
Some gunfire by neutrals was heard.
Some action at outposts occurred.
And that's the end of the news.

1 PM

"An Agency message last night
Describes a reconnaissance flight
But over what ground, at what height,
There are so far (I'm sorry) no clues.
Off Sweden some smoke has been seen
Which may indicate some submarine.
On the Westwall front all is serene.
And that's the end of the news.

4 PM

"Information has just been supplied
Camouflage has been recently tried
Our Air Force position to hide—
A highly ingenious ruse.
From France strict reserve is maintained,
Some gunfire has not been explained.
It has semi-officially rained.
And that's the end of the news.

6 PM

"In the communique we repeat
Official reserve is complete.
According to Reuter the Fleet
Has captured (I'm sorry) some crews.
Reconnaissance flights have been flown,
Important results have been shown.
The Market closed firmer in tone.
And that's the end of the news.

9 PM

"Some talks are proceeding somewhere,
We are ready by land, sea, and air.
The War Council has met to compare
Completely identical views.
The French communique on the war
States all is the same as before.
(I'm sorry, I'll read that once more)
And that's the end of the news."

SAGITTARIUS.

"New Statesman and Nation," London

Barter and Exchange

ADVERTISEMENT appearing in a recent issue of the *Wall Street Journal:*

Godparent Wanted: Now restricted by limited funds, depression definanced student, with fine record, high I.Q., excellent family, seeks a benefactor, someone of character and culture, to give the moral support, financial backing, social connections and guidance as to make feasible a program of study and activity here and abroad. It is desirable that it be a parent-child relationship. It would not be expensive, but in terms of return, mental satisfaction, and the joy of accomplishment of a great good and service one could find no better investment. Write, Godparent, *Wall Street Journal.*

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Death of a Warrior

A. B. Magil tells about the great man who was Moissaye J. Olgin. A friend of New Masses.

ONLY the other day I talked to him on the phone. He had written an article for NEW MASSES about the effect of recent Soviet foreign policy on the Jewish people. It had been set in type, but for technical reasons it had been impossible to publish the article immediately. About two weeks had passed. "I don't think you ought to publish the article," he said. "So much has happened since I wrote it. It really requires an entirely new approach." I tried to persuade him that there was nothing wrong with the article, that it required only a few minor revisions to bring it up to date. "No," he said, "a new emphasis is needed. The situation has changed so much. Send the article back. I'll try to write another."

Five days later Moissaye J. Olgin was dead. On my desk lie the galley proofs of his last article. He wasn't satisfied with it. "I'll try to write you another." It was characteristic of the man. Nothing he did was perfunctory, nothing was too much. There was always time, energy for something more—one more article, speech, meeting, book. Until the end came, suddenly, in his home, among friends, on the morning of November 22 as he prepared to go to his office—once more.

Moissaye J. Olgin was the outstanding leader of the Jewish masses in this country, one of the most remarkable personalities of our day. He was the teacher and inspirer of two generations of Jewish workers in two countries, Russia and the United States, and his name was known and revered among Jewish workers throughout the world. But Olgin was much more than political leader and editor. With him politics and culture were one and he could turn from a polemical article to the writing of a literary essay or novel or short story or poem. His was a full-blooded, many-sided personality to which nothing human was alien. He was almost as well known as a writer and speaker in English as in Yiddish.

TORRENTIAL ENERGY

The impact of Olgin's personality was extraordinary. His energy was torrential. It was a palpable thing, leaping from every word and gesture. He seemed always to think and work at top speed, living every moment as if it were the most important in his life. His sheer productiveness was fabulous. A complete bibliography of his writings would itself be a *magnum opus*. They go back to the first years of the present century when he was a leader first in the Russian revolutionary student movement and then in the Bund, the Jewish Socialist organization.

In recent years, in addition to his work as editor-in-chief of the *Morning Freiheit*, Yiddish Communist newspaper, a fulltime job in itself, Olgin wrote innumerable articles in Yiddish, English, and Russian (he acted as the American correspondent of the Moscow *Pravda*); translated articles and books from these three languages as well as from German, Hebrew, and Polish (he was the English translator of Engels' *The Peasant War in Germany* and a number of Lenin's works); did a daily English column in his newspaper. He wrote books in Yiddish and English which included literary criticism, history, social and political essays, reminiscences, novels, short stories, plays, and poetry—and dozens of pamphlets, among them *Why Communism?* which was translated into twelve languages and sold about a half million copies. He made thousands of speeches, taught classes in a variety of subjects, gave advice to countless numbers of young writers, closely followed developments in Soviet, Yiddish, and American literature—one could go on almost indefinitely.

OLGIN'S YOUTHFULNESS

And nothing was formal or humdrum. Everything Olgin did had his peculiar freshness and enthusiasm and youthfulness, was suffused with the spirit of the living struggle for democracy and socialism. With it all he was intensely human, warm and gay, with a vast love of life. Olgin was anything but a recluse. He could be found at parties, at the theater, at art exhibitions. It was difficult to believe that this man was past sixty, that all his life he had had to battle against ill health, that so much of his work, done so joyously, was accomplished in physical torment.

Olgin remained unquenchable till the end. On his desk at the time of his death were notes for a new work on Soviet Yiddish literature. A book in English on twenty-two years of the Soviet Union was scheduled for publication by Modern Age Books. Still another was projected.

Only those who know Yiddish can appreciate the full flavor of Olgin's personality. I was sixteen or seventeen when I came across a book of essays on modern Jewish poets. The name of the author, M. Olgin, was new to me, but in the Jewish labor movement that name had been known since the beginning of the century. The book impressed me both by its content and style (though they tell me that one doesn't know Olgin the stylist unless one can read his Russian), but it was not till later years that I learned what the name Olgin really meant. Olgin was loved by the Jewish workers as they loved no other man. There was a peculiar tenderness and intimacy in their attitude toward him. To them he was *unser Olgin* (our Olgin), not only their teacher and leader, but one of their own, their comrade and friend who spoke their own thoughts. Their grief at his death was a deeply personal grief.

Early last spring, while recuperating from a serious heart attack that had kept him at home many weeks, Olgin called me on the phone. NEW MASSES had shortly before made changes in its format and introduced a number of other improvements. "I wanted to tell you how much I love NEW MASSES," he said. "It is really such a joy to read. I learn something from every issue." He talked about the magazine as if it were something personal, part of his own intimate life. It was characteristic of him. That was his attitude toward every achievement of the labor and progressive movement. A few days later I visited him at his home. He lay on a couch, his face ashen and older than I had ever seen it. But from his eyes, those blue-gray, intense, searching eyes there shone a flame that seemed never to be consumed. And the spirit of the man! In the last weeks of his illness he had been dictating his daily English column, as well as frequent articles in Yiddish, and had collected the material for his book on the USSR. I expressed amazement at his capacity for work and at the ease with which he wrote. "I love to write," he said. "Once the ideas are gathered together in my head, the rest is easy. In two hours at the most the article is finished."

MOISSAYE J. OLGIN. *Tens of thousands participated in his funeral ceremonies on November 27.*

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

He talked about the two books which he was planning. The second was to be a personal book, the story of his twenty-five years in the United States, the story not only of an active political and literary life, but of a spiritual quest. "I am going to call the book *I Chose America*. What do you think of that title? *I Chose America*—and I did. I lived in Russia, in Germany and Austria, but America was the land of my choice. And when I came here, back in 1914, I began to look for the real America. I thought I would find it in the

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Socialist Party. I joined the Socialist Party and began to write for the *Jewish Daily Forward*. But the policies of the party and the corruption of the *Forward* began to disgust me and I realized that this was not the America that I sought. Then I thought that I would find this America among the native American intellectuals. I published my first book in English, *The Soul of the Russian Revolution,* got my Ph.D. at Columbia, and began to write in the *New Republic* and to teach at the New School for Social Research. For a time I became something of a pet of the liberal intellectuals who were playing around with radical ideas. I thought they would show me the real America, they who wrote and talked so much about the American tradition, American culture. I was wrong. They too were sterile. In 1921 I together with other militant Jewish Socialists broke with the Socialist Party and shortly after joined the Communist Party. And in this small, persecuted, so-called 'foreign' organization I found the real America, the America of the majority of the people that will some day be Socialist America. From that day my life and the life of the party became one. I want to tell that story in my book. What do you think of the idea?"

I caught his enthusiasm. A splendid idea. Our movement needs such a book. But now it will never be written. The flame that burned so brightly has finally been consumed. But he would not ask for tears. He would ask from the living, work, and still more work. Moissaye Olgin was a Bolshevik. He had such faith in the working class, in socialism, in mankind's future. He knew that the cause of freedom never dies.

A. B. MAGIL.

Mischa Richter

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Get Out the Tin Boxes!

Thanks to the ALP splitters, Tammany Hall gets a two-thirds majority in the New York City Council.

AT THE Seventeenth Street Wigwam there is much chortling these days. For the first time since 1933 "Happy Days Are Here Again" is heard in the precincts of Tammany Hall. "The bhoys" think that they're on the way back. It was a clean sweep for them in the November election and they're sure that they can't be beaten in 1941 by anything north of Coney Island.

On the surface it looks as if the Tiger's stalwarts have something to cheer about. Tammany and its Democratic organization allies swept every judicial and county office contested. The new City Council will have fourteen organization Democrats among its twenty-one members—a clear two-thirds majority, enabling the Hall and its pals of the other four counties to override Mayor LaGuardia's veto. Whoopee! Get out the tin boxes!

Does this mean that the people of the city are anxious for the dear old days of Jimmy Walker, Sheriff Farley, the Vice Squad, and Chile Acuna? The figures don't show it. A total of 2,064,759 persons registered but only 1,801,281 voted for councilmen. Since the Democratic organization generally musters most of its vote, it is practically certain that the stay-at-homes were virtually all anti-Tammany independents who weren't sufficiently concerned, although they had the foresight to enroll and register, giving them the opportunity to vote in the spring primaries next year.

WHAT THE VOTES MEAN

Analyzing the actual votes cast for City Council—probably the best index, since proportional representation gives the most direct clue to the voters' attitude—we get an even clearer picture. Of 1,577,188 valid ballots cast in the five counties, approximately 770,000 first choice votes were garnered by Democratic organization candidates, or about 48 percent of the total. The rest went to non-Democrats of a variety of descriptions. Thus, the organization Democrats failed to get an absolute majority of the low, off-year vote. Nevertheless, they won 66⅔ percent of the Council.

Why? Because of superior organization on their side and total lack of unity on the other. The Democratic machine clicked. Virtually every Democratic vote counted. When Democrats were eliminated and their second choice votes distributed, they invariably helped pile up large majorities for their fellow candidates. The only other organization in the city that showed this kind of discipline was the Communist, a fact readily recognized by all informed municipal politicos.

But Tammany cohesion is nothing new in city politics. It existed in 1937 but the Tiger was miserably defeated nonetheless. The new factors in 1939 were not only the usual off-year apathy but, in the first instance, the splitting policy of the warmongering official leadership of the American Labor Party. It was this policy which rent the ALP wide open six weeks before Election Day, plunged the party into a crisis, disgusted thousands of independent voters, and paved the way for Tammany's victory. If the Tiger comes back in 1941—and that is by no means inevitable—the workers and middle class taxpayers of New York may thank Alex Rose, David Dubinsky, Louis Waldman, and their confreres.

THE FRUIT OF REACTION

Despite Alex Rose's finely spun theories over highball glasses at the Labor Club, the fact remains that the ALP vote has been dropping steadily for the last two years, from a peak of 482,000 in 1937 to about 340,000 in 1938 and 238,000 in 1939. ALP councilmanic representation was cut from six to two. These are the fruits of Mr. Rose's splitting policy. While it may be drawing a long bow to say that the anti-Tammany forces would have won a majority in the City Council, the figures show that the ALP could have elected at least three more men had those in control followed the Labor Party's 1937 policy. In Manhattan Langdon Post, the ALP candidate, could easily have been elected if he had been the recipient of the second choice votes of Israel Amter, the Communist candidate. In Brooklyn, Laborite Andrew Armstrong also would have been elected had he been given the bulk or a sizable portion of Communist Peter V. Cacchione's second choices. In the Bronx Michael J. Quill would have breezed through to easy victory—as it was, he came just short of election—had Quill not been the target of desperate attack by the Rose-Dubinsky crowd, who made his defeat a central objective in the campaign.

One of the big surprises was the remarkable write-in vote of the Communist Party. Despite the fact that it was thrown off the ballot only a few short weeks before the elections, the party nevertheless managed to get more than 47,000 first choice votes in the four counties in which it had candidates. Cacchione's percentage of the total valid ballots actually rose slightly from that of 1937. In that year he received 4.32 percent of the first choice votes in Brooklyn; in 1939 he received 4.34 percent, despite the fact that the voters had to write in his none-too-easy-to-spell name. Even the New York *World-Telegram* had to admit, in its issue of November 17, that the Brooklyn Communist's record was remarkable. Under a double column headline, "CACCHIONE SETS A REAL RECORD IN RACE FOR COUNCIL SEAT," the *World-Telegram* said:

> But although he [Cacchione] was tenth last election in a field of ninety-nine and tenth this year in a field of fifty-three, his showing this year was considered by observers to be even more remarkable than that when he and the leading Republican candidate fought to the end for the last place in the borough's delegation. . . .
>
> This year he was ruled from the ballot by the Board of Elections in common with Communist candidates in the three other major boroughs, and he could be voted for only by writing his name on the ballot and then writing a number opposite it. A total of 24,132 persons went to the trouble of writing in his name as first choice.

The election showed beyond doubt that the Communist Party was alive and kicking. The voters also demonstrated their desire for progressive unity by defeating the ultra-reactionary Republican, Abner Surpless, and sternly rebuking the warmongering Laborite leadership. But grave problems face the people of New York City. Unity of the labor forces, acting as an independent factor, with the good-government anti-Tammany middle class elements can still prevent a reactionary and corrupt Tammany Hall from returning to power in 1941.

A PROGRESSIVE ALP

But before such a thing is possible the progressive forces will have to win out in the ALP. The good-government elements on their part must refrain from drawing pessimistic conclusions from the election. The tendency to regard as inevitable a rightward swing—to which some of the good government forces are ready to surrender—must be combated. If the middle class forces around Mayor LaGuardia stand firm on the pro-labor and clean-government policies of the past five years and if the genuinely progressive forces within the Labor Party defeat the Roses and Dubinskys, the city will see in 1941 another notable victory over Tammany.

FRANK GOELET.

America Fights Back

ALTHOUGH you may not have seen it in your newspaper, the honor roll of American democrats who have denounced the Dies un-American committee has been growing. Late additions: Thomas R. Reid, Chicago, executive vice president of the U. S. Junior Chamber of Commerce, who said, "Our purpose is to make democracy work through positive action, not by hunting Communists." The Michigan convention of Labor's Non-Partisan League passed a scorching resolution; the San Francisco chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, after a lengthy legal examination, has published an "Indictment in the Court of Public Opinion" against the committee's mockery of legal procedure, a damning document that you won't read about in your newspaper. The national convention of the Farmers Educational and Cooperative Union; Local 708 of the United Furniture Workers, CIO, in Chicago; the Rev. L. M. Birkhead of Pittsburgh; Mayor Fletcher Bowron of Los Angeles; Rockwell Kent; and the state conventions of the CIO in New York and New Jersey have also put the blast on the committee.

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Back to Work—to What?

In Detroit the Chrysler Corp., with the aid of Silver Charlie Coughlin et al, operates the Mohawk Valley Formula.

Detroit.

Poor Mrs. Clara Schindler! The union treated her so bad! It threw her son—a Dodge employee and her sole support—out of work, and left her and her husband "in dire straits." But Mrs. Schindler was plucky. Alone and unaided (except by the Chrysler Corp., Father Coughlin, Gerald L. K. Smith, and Homer Martin's corporal's guard in the AFL) she picketed the Dodge picketline to shame the men back to their jobs.

"No Work, No Kiss!" was the slogan of the Lysistrata legion of Chrysler wives Mrs. Schindler proposed to organize. She spread her pitiful plight over the front pages of the nation's newspapers. Then, as suddenly and mysteriously as she had appeared, Mrs. Schindler retired. "The strain has been too much," her husband explained. Leaders of the United Automobile Workers (CIO), after careful investigation, put forth another explanation. They said that in reality Mrs. Schindler has no son, that her husband enjoys a cushy city job, that Mrs. Schindler owns four houses, including a duplex.

MRS. SCHINDLER'S STORY

"I will answer these accusations one by one," replied the indignant Mrs. Schindler. "I don't own four houses. But my husband and I own five houses. He has worked at the Water Board for twenty-five years, and while we are not rich people, we certainly are comfortably fixed. It is true I have no son, but when I say 'son' I refer to my son-in-law, one of our tenants. Just the same, I am not a stooge for Chrysler!"

So flopped the first pillar of the Chrysler Corp.'s grandiose scheme for smashing the auto union. By the time this appears in print, the rest of the superstructure may have toppled. The union, far from being broken, is stronger than ever. It is only a question of time before the men will be back on the job under a much improved contract, including machinery for arbitration of grievances, vacations with pay, and substantial wage increases.

Nevertheless, the corporation's effort, ill-fated as it may have been, deserves serious study by all friends of labor. It was, in fact, a streamlined version of Bergoff & Rand's infamous Mohawk Valley Formula.

Well in advance of the shutdown, top corporation executives insured themselves against personal loss by unloading a large block of Chrysler stock, intending to pick it up later at bargain prices. That the precaution was wise is proved by the corporation's latest earnings report, showing a cool $25,000,000 profit in the first half of 1939.

CORPORATION SABOTAGE

The next step was equally shrewd. Production schedules for the 1940 models were set at levels humanly impossible to meet. Workers who cracked under the strain of trying to keep up were summarily discharged. Simultaneously company officials raised a carefully prepared hue and cry about a mythical "slowdown" strike. When, on October 6, as a result of these tactics, the entire production line was disorganized, the Dodge Plant was closed and the men were *locked out*. Other Chrysler units shortly followed.

The maneuver was carefully timed. One week before the lockout the old contract had expired. Two weeks before the lockout the UAW-CIO had won an overwhelming victory in a National Labor Relations Board election. There was every possibility that on the strength of it the union would demand a better contract. Government intervention, fruit of the current war hysteria, was also heavily counted on.

From the outset the corporation displayed a singular lack of interest in negotiations. It busied itself instead with issuing inflammatory news releases accusing the union of all sorts of fantastic things, including a desire to "sovietize" the plants. For the rest it was content to let the workers starve awhile. It only sought to hasten the process by prevailing upon the Michigan Unemployment Compensation Commission to withhold the unemployment benefits to which the men were legally entitled.

"BACK TO WORK"

After a month of this kind of pressure the time was believed ripe for further development of the Mohawk Formula. Mrs. Schindler was turned loose on the Dodge picketline. Beside her picture in every large Detroit paper appeared, by a strange coincidence, front page editorials proclaiming a "back to work" movement. By an equally strange collusion of circumstances, the "Associated Chrysler, Dodge, DeSoto, and Plymouth Dealers of America"—a non-existent organization—began publishing a series of full page advertisements. These appeals to "GO BACK TO WORK and permit a peaceful, deliberated settlement" were, like the editorials, aimed not so much at the locked out men as at the "American People"—an undercover call for vigilantism.

Nor did the coincidences end here. Mrs. Schindler's demarche occurred on November 6, the last day of Mayor Reading's campaign for reelection on the slogan "Defeat CIO and Communism." (P. S. He lost, magnificently.) Minor notes in the "back to work" chorus were being sung by Father Coughlin and column after column of anonymous contributors to the Detroit *News* Letter Box.

The climax of the drive came when Homer Martin announced he would lead his men back into the factories. Chrysler's own figures tell the story. Of ten thousand Plymouth workers, 650—mostly foremen and maintenance men—showed up. At DeSoto, exactly two appeared; at the Kercheval plant, fourteen; at Jefferson, six. Of the twenty thousand employees at Dodge, not a single production worker entered the gates! Undismayed, and in the face of the forty thousand Detroiters who packed Cadillac Square to pledge support to the locked out workers, Martin announced a monster "back to work" mass meeting at the State Fair Grounds. Eighteen, including six CIO observers, turned out. "Let's go home," said one. "We look foolish here."

VIOLENCE AGAINST STRIKERS

The next step in the Mohawk Formula calls for violence against the picketlines, which have numbered from two thousand to seven thousand daily since the lockout began. The corporation has asked Governor Dickinson to furnish National Guardsmen for the purpose. Will this maneuver meet with better success than the others?

"The Chrysler Corp. should realize by this time that their lockout has failed," said Leo LaMotte, burly Executive Board member of the UAW-CIO, and co-director with Richard Frankensteen of Region One on Detroit's East Side, where half of the 375,000 union members work. "Not only our membership but 90 percent of the general public are behind us. No Mohawk Valley Formula can possibly work in such a situation."

"But suppose the corporation did succeed in driving the men back to work. What would they go 'back to work' to?"

LaMotte reflected a moment. "First off the bat every active union member would be fired. The speedup would be worse than before the lockout, worse than at Ford's, even, and that's saying something! This, in turn, would mean fewer jobs. We used to work Saturday and Sunday before we got the union, and I guess we'd be doing that again. No overtime pay, either. Wages would go down just like—but what the hell."

LaMotte smiled. "We'll never go back under those conditions."

"Under what conditions, then?"

"Under what conditions? With a contract in our pocket and a union button on our cap!"

ARTHUR CLIFFORD.

Hear, Hear!

"We have not got democratic government today. We never had it, and I venture to suggest to the honorable members opposite that we shall never have it. What we have done in all the progress of reform and evolution of politics is to broaden the basis of oligarchy."—*From a speech by that eminent "democrat," Sir Anthony Eden, delivered in 1928.*

Yes, Sir Anthony, we know, and we would like to hear a couple of more sensible remarks like that from the assorted propagandists now visiting our shores. It seems that they are misrepresenting the empire by advertising it as a "democratic" nation.

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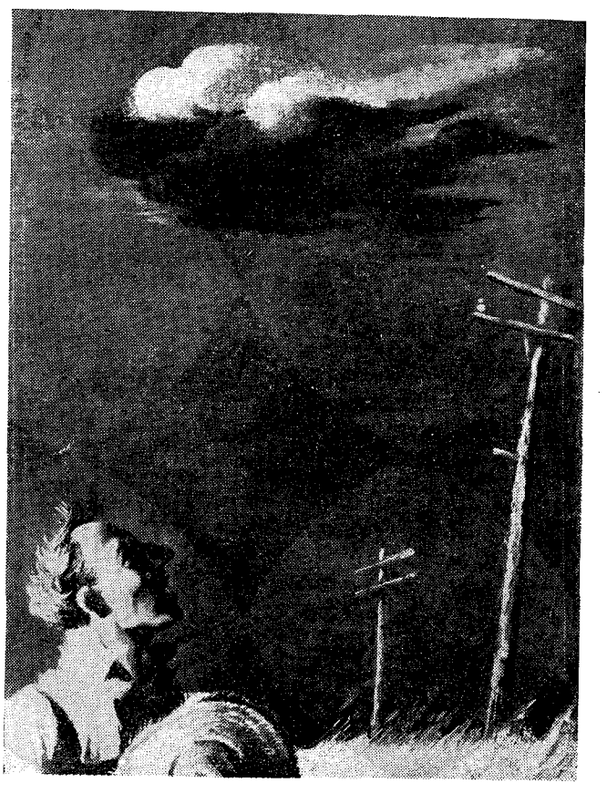
Louisiana Cotton Pickers

Oklahoma Dust

Exodus (Arkansas)



Farmer and Raincloud (Iowa)

Working in Florida

Panorama of America

OF THE American scene, which Georges Schreiber exhibits at the Associated American Artists gallery, 711 Fifth Ave., New York, the artist and caricaturist says: "To me the United States consists of four parts. When I start from my home in New York I compare it to a symphony. From New York to Chicago would be 'Allegro,' a quick moving country, slightly mountainous, and people with little color. Chicago to Denver would be 'Andante'—poco moderato—the prairies with the endless, gentle swing of wheatfields in Kansas under a burning flatness which melts with the horizon, a riot of yellow and sunlight. Then suddenly the third movement which starts with a 'molto vivace con fuoco'—the Rocky Mountains introduce the final stage of the trip, the Grand Finale, which is California reached on the Nevada side."

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★

Who's Backing Finland?

ANY Latvian, Estonian, or Lithuanian will tell you there's something rotten in Finland. Any waterlogged Dutchman or mine-bound Belgian wonders what on earth these Finnish ministers are up to. Reasonable people take it as general good fortune that the Baltic has been spared the horrors of the North Sea. Negotiation of peaceful relations with their powerful Soviet neighbor has brought the Baltic states good dividends in trade and security.

What perverse romanticism spurs the Finnish ministers to gamble in a game they cannot hope to win? Upon what international backing do they speculate that impels them to aggravate relations with their most powerful neighbor?

If England is prodding the Finns, at least remembrance of things Polish ought to make them wary. If it be argued that British preoccupation elsewhere makes military aid to Finland unlikely, that would make the Finnish attitude all the more provocative. One dispatch from Washington this week suggests that the Germans have a hand in the Finn-agling. Baron Mannerheim, in command of the Finnish military forces, is notoriously pro-German. Under his leadership the Finnish workers' government was crushed twenty years ago. His anti-Soviet hostility sets the tone for the younger officers, scions of the Swedo-Finnish ruling classes.

Most significant for us are reports this week that Finland is negotiating a $25,000,000 loan in the American market, supposedly for railways. That would come to a pile of Finnish marks, something over a billion, or as much as the war-deflated customs receipts are netting Helsinki. Equally interesting is the fact that Finland bulked large in the purchase of American airplane parts and engines during the month of October. The State Department this week revealed that before the embargo was lifted, licenses for arms and munitions shipments had doubled over last year. Finland, Sweden, and Turkey were reported among the largest purchasers, the former's share coming to $848,900, almost 42,000,000 Finnish marks.

It should be remembered that by the non-aggression treaty of January 1932 the Soviet Union invited the Finns to Moscow almost ten weeks ago. A mutual assistance pact was proposed, which the Finns declined. The Soviets asked that the frontier above Leningrad be moved back about fifteen miles; in return the Russians offered twice as much terra firma in Soviet Karelia. Again the Finns refused. Desiring to lease a bit of real estate at Hangoe, the Soviet Union also asked for its rights at the Petsamoe corridor in the Arctic, upon whose seizure the Finns had contracted much of that famous war debt, as Alter Brody disclosed in NEW MASSES last week. The Soviet Union likewise suggested a mutual demilitarization of frontiers, all of which the Finnish ministers rejected.

Meanwhile, every type of chauvinist incitation is encouraged on Finnish soil. In a recent speech, Premier Cajander contrasted czarist Russia very favorably with the Soviet Union; although it was the czar who oppressed Finland, the Bolsheviks who gave it independence. Fifty million marks a day are being spent to keep 300,000 soldiers mobilized, almost one tenth the entire population. Rents and prices soar; half-billion-dollar defense loans are floated; housewives protest; children are kept from schools. Non-Communist newspapers, like *Suomen Penvilelja,* organ of the Small Farmers Party, have been shut down for criticizing government policy. Another newspaper was censored, the magazine *Soihtu* suppressed.

The Finnish Social Democrats, the largest single bloc in the Parliament (eighty-three votes out of two hundred) carry on something like the right wing of the American Labor Party in New York elections: their man Tanner is finance minister, one of those who broke off the negotiations on November 13. As might be expected where Social Democrats are running the show, the Finnish Communist Party has been bitterly persecuted for over a decade.

However, we doubt whether the hard-working, sensible, practical people of Finland (upon whom the burden of their government's mismanagement falls as in every capitalist country) are going to stand for it. Proverbially speaking, barking dogs don't bite. But in this case, they may be biting off more than they can chew.

The New Deal—Remodeled?

WASHINGTON these days is a city of great transformations. The New Deal is being remodeled. No one cares to mention the name of the architect, but there are abundant indications that it is none other than old man Wall Street.

Take that part of the New Deal edifice known as the federal budget. A budget is not only a blueprint of income and expenditure for the next fiscal year. To a large extent it is an index of the social character of a government. For example, the vast and constantly increasing expenditures of the Soviet government for such matters as wages, social security, education, and health tell us a great deal about the social character of that government. And similarly, the tentative plans for the next New Deal budget indicate the direction in which the New Deal is moving.

President Roosevelt has announced that the funds for what is called—euphemistically—national defense will be increased $500,000,000 in the 1941 fiscal year. This means a total of $2,250,000,000, a new peacetime record. Since the President has assured the people that he is determined to keep this country out of war and since no one suggests that we are in any danger of attack, one would expect some explanation for this proposed increase in military funds. So far, none has been forthcoming.

At the same time the President has demanded that other expenditures be "cut to the bone," as the New York *Times* puts it. What can this mean? The *Wall Street Journal* explains: "Obviously, the pruning knife will have to go deep into work relief, public works, and farm benefit appropriations if a sizable contribution is to be made to the $500,000,000 wanted for more nearly adequate defenses." And the "Washington-Merry-Go-Round" column reports that Roosevelt "has quietly ordered its [WPA's] new appropriation slashed to $1,000,000,000, a cut of $500,000,000 under the current budget." In other words, the New Deal is being remodeled according to the specifications of the bitterest enemies of what it stood for in the past.

The President has also announced that the country must decide whether the increased war appropriations are to be paid for by a new defense tax or additional borrowing. Certainly pay-as-you-go is always preferable to borrowing—provided the right people do the paying. After conferring with the President, Rep. Carl Vinson, chairman of the House Naval Affairs Committee, declared that he favored a special defense tax, with the money to be raised largely by soaking the wrong people, those in the low-income brackets. Is this, too, part of the new New Deal program?

Thurman Arnold's Weapon

ASST. ATTY. GEN. THURMAN ARNOLD knows that the anti-trust laws were intended solely to curb business monopolies. They failed in this purpose, becoming, under the Supreme Court's benevolence, "the greatest protection to uncontrolled business dictatorship"—as Arnold admits in his *Folklore of Capitalism.* Yet he now threatens to use these laws against labor unions, charging that strikes or boycotts against technological improvements that throw workers out of jobs or for the hiring of "useless" workers come under the heading of monopolistic practices.

But monopoly means the stifling of competition—and labor unions are not in competition with employers. The Sherman Anti-Trust Act, said its author, Senator Hoar, "affirmed the old doctrine of the common law"; under the English common law to which he referred, no labor union had ever been declared a monopoly or a combination in restraint of trade.

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The Clayton act, in 1914, expressly stated that labor unions were not such combinations. Certainly, today, this devious use of the anti-trust laws cannot be harmonized with the Norris-LaGuardia and Wagner acts, which recognize labor's right to organize, strike, and boycott.

Armed with so improper a weapon, Arnold proposes to attack windmills without considering what makes them go 'round. He deplores the teamsters' demand that every out-of-town truck entering New York carry a local union driver. But he is indifferent to the fact that the maintenance of the New York wage scale depends upon this practice. Arnold denounces the building unions which impede progress by opposing improved equipment, but his government does not offer work to the men made jobless by these improvements. The statement of the assistant attorney general has already brought a stinging rebuke from Henry Epstein, solicitor general of New York State, who in a letter to the *Times* points out the dangerous anti-labor implications of this new policy.

It is curious that the administration, while conducting through the Temporary National Economic Committee a leisurely investigation of patent pools, security administration, price leadership, and other methods of American big business monopoly, is in great haste to brand labor leaders as criminals because they protect their members. It looks as if the Department of Justice's crusade against Communism, launched under pressure of the imperialist war in Europe, is beginning to bear fruit in other fields. There are ample state laws against racketeering, fraud, or violence; we even have a federal anti-racketeering statute. But Arnold is after more fundamental game: the right to strike and boycott. A liberal administration appears to be industriously working out a new deal for employers.

The Witch Hunters Ride

IT MADE a good story even if it wasn't true—that tale that Robert W. Wiener, Communist Party financial secretary, had disappeared to escape prosecution in connection with the government's passport investigation. The news wires flashed it across the country. On millions of minds the word "Communist" was identified with "fugitive from justice." Of course the office of U. S. District Attorney John T. Cahill might have called up the national office of the Communist Party, where Wiener is employed, and asked where he was. They might have gotten in touch with Wiener's attorney, Joseph R. Brodsky. But that would have spoiled the story. The authorities would have learned just where Wiener could have been reached. But they didn't want Wiener; they wanted headlines. They were out to smear the Communist Party.

This incident, trivial as it may seem on the surface, is really highly significant. It indicates the kind of campaign that the Department of Justice is conducting against the party and its leader, Earl Browder. Despite the disclaimers of Attorney General Murphy, a witch hunt is being prepared. And certain of our more respectable colleges have caught the signal. Harvard, Princeton, and Dartmouth have banned speeches by Browder despite requests from students and faculty members that he be allowed to speak. Dr. Charles Seymour, president of Yale, to his credit refused to join the witch hunters and granted permission for a Browder meeting. Despite the smear campaign there is a rising demand in the colleges that Browder be heard.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt has likewise fallen into line, a symptom of how fast the administration is moving toward the right—and toward the creation of a war psychology. She obliged the Red-baiters and jingoes at the head of the twelfth district of the American Legion with a statement that Browder and Gil Green, chairman of the Young Communist League, really owe their first allegiance to another country. The First Lady stoops, but not to conquer. And it was neither Earl Browder nor Gil Green who recently participated in a prayer for the victory of a foreign potentate at war.

Cuba Elects an Assembly

CUBA'S election of its new Constituent Assembly on November 15 was an important index of how deeply the democratic currents are running around the island republic. Extremely poor weather magnified the difficulties of transport; slightly more than 50 percent of the registered voters cast their ballot. The election set a precedent for orderliness; with returns incomplete, it is nevertheless clear that at least thirty-five of the seventy-six members of the Assembly, charged with drafting a new constitution, are committed to the support of the Batista government. Most significant was the high electoral tide for the Coalition Union Revolucionaria Communista, the progressive labor united front which polled more than 100,000 votes and elected eight representatives to the Assembly. More important than their numbers are the organizations represented: among others they are: Blas Roca, secretary of the Cuban Communist Party; Dr. Juan Marinello, the prominent Cuban intellectual and president of the Coalition; Cesar Vilar, founder of the Cuban Confederation of Labor; Lazaro Pena, its present secretary; Esperanza Sanchez, president of the Cuban Federation of Negroes.

Nonetheless, the reactionary elements, grouped around the former president, Menocal, the ABC Party, and Grau San Martin, demonstrated the definite influence they retain in Cuban affairs. This is all the more menacing in the light of new pressures which our State Department is bringing upon the Cuban republic. Washington views Cuban problems in terms of American investments, and naval defense in the Caribbean. President Roosevelt's manipulation of the sugar tariffs and quotas works great hardships upon the people; the unsatisfactory reciprocal trade treaty has a similar effect. Proposals are now made to affix a Treaty of Navigation to the projected constitution—a virtual new Platt Amendment.

Cuba recalls the bad neighbor policy very well. The record of Sumner Welles and his crony, former ambassador Caffery, now American ambassador to Brazil, is indelibly written in Cuban memory. The vote for the new Assembly thus becomes a warning that a large proportion of the Cuban people will resist imperialist intrigue at the expense of their political and economic welfare.

Within the Reich

RIFTS and fissures within German monopoly capital were dramatized in an unusually striking fashion by the arrival in Zurich of Fritz Thyssen who left Germany "because he expressed [himself] emphatically against the war and the present policy of the Reich." A leading German industrialist, member of the board of the Vereingte Stahlwerke, the Rhenish steel trust, it was at Thyssen's initiative, in the Cologne home of the banker von Schroeder, that the arrangement was made with von Papen which handed power to Hitler in January 1933. Thyssen most clearly represented big business support for the Nazi movement; he was a member of the fascist Reichstag and dominated the economic controls of German industry. When figures of this kind leave the Nazi fold, the cleavage in upper class support for Hitler must be far advanced.

In this connection, London made the astounding confession last week that two British agents, Payne Best and Capt. Henry Stevens, whom the Nazis accuse of complicity in the Munich bombing, represent "officials of the government." In the words of the New York *Times* cable for November 25, they were dealing "with supposedly responsible persons in Germany who were interested in supplanting the present regime and negotiating peace." In short, there are many Fritz Thyssens in Germany. With them the British are trying to arrange what Duff Cooper blandly phrased "the revolution from the right." The strategy of the Allies, accounting in part for the phony war, is to shake up Germany just a bit, retaining the structure of German fascism, but redirecting its foreign policy against the Soviet Union. All this confirms the Communist estimate that the Allies are not fighting for democracy, either within their empires, at home, or for Germany. They are reckoning without third parties; the German working class will have the final and decisive say.

Speak Up, Mr. Murphy

THE NEW MASSES expose of Charles E. Coughlin's money-making proclivities has gotten under the skin of the fascist radio-spellbinder. We reprint on the next page his true-to-form rejoinder to John L. Spivak's devastating documents. Coughlin's reply is identical to those another spellbinder made for many years to any charges brought against him. This latter demagogue operated out of Munich, and not Detroit. And his reply to all truth di-

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rected at his policies was "They're Reds," or "They're Jews." History has already recorded what happens when such "refutation" is accepted.

Because we don't want that to happen here, NEW MASSES has presented Mr. Spivak's remarkable expose. We have notified those federal agencies which bespoke their intentions to root out fascist activities in this country. Atty. Gen. Frank J. Murphy has received photostatic proofs of certain of our charges. Mr. Murphy has not yet replied. The post office authorities have referred the matter to their Chicago regional headquarters. We have offered to turn over all documentary proofs in our hands—but evidently the authorities have no burning interest in obtaining those proofs.

NEW MASSES feels that Mr. Spivak's charges merit the most serious and immediate consideration by the American people. If their representatives in Washington do not take the initiative in pursuing the investigation, then the people should draw the necessary conclusions.

In subsequent articles Mr. Spivak will reveal Coughlin's shady labor record. That will be of fundamental importance to all labor, and especially to the Detroit workingmen who are today engaged in a stirring struggle to retain whatever gains they made in recent years and to advance a peg further. Coughlin is lined up with all the enemies of labor. Further, Spivak will reveal Coughlin's secret conniving, not only with Henry Ford's Bennett, but also with Adolf Hitler's emissaries. The evidence will be presented in documentary material and the proper conclusions drawn.

Certainly Mr. Murphy should bestir himself. Why he is silent to date warrants serious questioning on the part of the public. All trade unionists, all genuine progressives, should want to know why federal attention is not paid to the spurious "friend of the people"—Silver Charlie Coughlin. His motivations and his support have been dragged out of the dark and a democracy need well be alarmed at the spectacle. Telegrams, letters, mass meetings, and resolutions should be directed to Attorney General Murphy demanding further investigation and action upon the charges made here.

The American people know where the infamous Rep. Martin Dies stands on indigenous fascist activities here. But where do you stand, Attorney General Murphy? The people have the right to know.

12

Press and Propaganda

Communists Slipping, Turn on the 'Smear'

Comrade John Spivak Comes to Aid of Distrait Party With Anti-Coughlin Stuff

By LEWIS SEWARD

LIKE EARL BROWDER, its most publicized backfield man, the Communist Party of America is out on bail.

Hauled before the bar of American public opinion shortly after announcement of the Soviet-Nazi pact, the Communist Party stands charged with the grossest violations of Americanism—with treason to the American flag, in which the Communists sought to wrap their Washington-Moscow axis.

It is almost certain that the jury, the American people, will find the Communist Party guilty as charged, and that the draggle-tailed, gutter Reds will be forced to return to the back alleys of political life from which they emerged to plague American Government, American labor, American society, American education with their poisonous gospel of Russian Redism.

The Communists realize this. Faced with the greatest journalistic headache of the decade—Joe Stalin's [illegible] the Soviet-

JOHN SPIVAK

Communist, radical propagandist, American Russo-phile, and long time muckraker.

Who is this Spivak who does such a splendid job of character assassination in the Communist manner? According to his own testimony, he is "America's Ace Reporter," but, strangely, his reporting is done solely for the Communist Daily Worker,

A Red Rag on the Rocks

AMONG THE THINGS that crawled out from under the editor's rotting doormat last Saturday, was a Communist smear-snoop. The effrontery with which this bungling reporter bludgeoned his way into the homes of staff members of SOCIAL JUSTICE gave notice that the personnel and policies of the magazine—as well as Father Coughlin—might be included in the advertised series of articles which John L. Spivak proposes to write for *New Masses*.

After snooping interviews at the homes of staff members, Mr. Spivak was referred to the counsel for Social Justice Publishing Company and an authorized statement of policy was issued for his use.

The irony is, that it is extremely doubtful if *New Masses* will survive to print the stories. Acting on a report that the Communist weekly would suspend publication on Thursday, the *New York Herald Tribune* sent a reporter to see [illegible] editor

[illegible] the responsibility for the actions which, indirectly, they have encouraged.

[illegible] against Communism. [illegible] Jewish veterans ever protest their own racials selling the *New Masses*, the *Moscow Daily News* or the *Daily Worker*?

* * *

If a Christian Front group were to clean up the smut and Communist smear stuff on New York newsstands there would be a terrible howl of anti-Semitism and persecution.

* * *

Mr. Lewis in his Seattle speech, says it would hasten if business side with. He says that after the workers are [illegible] "we will come in and [illegible] some of that Jewish

IT GOT UNDER COUGHLIN'S SKIN. *Unable to refute the evidence John L. Spivak presents on Silver Charlie's financial manipulations, the Detroit radio spellbinder musters up his usual comeback—i.e., "Everybody ag'in me is a Red." It's a comeback Hitler made famous. But the silence of the tomb hangs over Royal Oak when you ask about the documentary evidence Spivak presents. The above "argument" appeared in Coughlin's fascist organ "Social Justice" November 13.*

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Readers' Forum

THE following letters on John L. Spivak's articles exposing Father Coughlin are but a few of those NM has received during the past fortnight. In future issues we hope to be able to find room to print more of our readers' reactions to the Spivak series.

George Seldes
Author and Journalist

SEVERAL years ago, reviewing a book, I said that John L. Spivak was the best reporter in America. The present series which he is writing for NEW MASSES exposing the notorious gentleman who denounced international gold, while making a neat profit in national silver, confirms Spivak's place in our journalism.

But much more important than being a good or a bad journalist, getting scoops, being scooped, writing like an angel or a devil, is the subject matter of present day journalism.

There was a time when the magazines and some newspapers went after big game: the corruption of cities, the crimes of the oil trust, the horrors of the meat-packing industry, the crookedest game in the world, called politics. I am not so sure that any newspaper or magazine indulged in what Theodore Roosevelt later sneeringly called "muckraking" the moment it learned that telling any sort of a vital truth meant a financial loss.

I am quite certain that no commercial publication today will take up any subject, discussion of which may impair advertising revenue or incur financial revenge. Therefore our great reporters dare not, cannot, write about the really important things in America. Mr. Spivak can. But there are only a handful of publications which dare even to attempt to tell the truth. NEW MASSES should be congratulated—and supported—by all enemies of anti-Semitism in its present campaign exposing one of America's greatest enemies—Father Coughlin.

Harry D. Wohl
International Vice President, American Newspaper Guild

THE Spivak scalpel on the dissembler of Royal Oak, who from the sanctuary of the cleric's frock jets venom upon all that is decent in American life, is long overdue. No more valuable contribution can be made to the times than this series stripping away the vestments of a false priest and exposing Father Charles E. Coughlin and his devices.

The American Newspaper Guild at its national convention in San Francisco last August passed a resolution denouncing Coughlin as "an enemy of progressive unionism, a harbinger of fascism, and a would-be strikebreaker." The resolution came from a Chicago delegate, a good Catholic, Jack Gibbons Morris, a striker against William Randolph Hearst's Chicago *Herald-American*.

Coughlin's *Social Justice* of May 22, 1939, devoted the entire front cover to a smiling photograph of Hearst, a headline, "JEWS BOYCOTT HEARST FOR AIDING FR. COUGHLIN," and text reading in part: "Because radio station WINS, New York City, owned by Hearst interests, has rented time on the air for Father Coughlin for his Sunday broadcasts, a general Jewish boycott has been threatened against Hearst newspapers. Station WINS will not cancel Father Coughlin's broadcast on that account. . . ."

What Coughlin's *Social Justice* did not say in its twining of the brows of the "crusader" of San Simeon with laurel, was that the Chicago Newspaper Guild had been on strike for more than five months against Hearst's two Chicago newspapers, the *Herald & Examiner* and the *Evening American,* for the preservation of their union, for some measure of security, for decent working conditions. What *Social Justice* did not say was that the entire Congress of Industrial Organizations (predominantly Catholic), great sections of the American Federation of Labor, the railroad brotherhoods, independent unions, fraternal and religious and social groups, were supporting the strike and refusing to read the Hearst newspapers until equitable settlement had been made in Chicago. What *Social Justice* did not say was that the *New World,* official organ of the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, had supported the strikers editorially. These things were omitted and it was made to appear that the revulsion of decent elements in American life against the Hearst newspapers was "Communist revenge." If that isn't strikebreaking, or, to use an uglier word, plain scabbery, what is it?

Thanks, John Spivak! Thanks, Joe North! Thanks, NEW MASSES!

Morris Watson
International Vice President, American Newspaper Guild

LONG ago I learned to brace myself before reading one of Spivak's exposes. The first installment on Father Coughlin indicates the necessity for extra-special bracing this time. Incidentally, I rode past my elevated stop reading it.

William Z. Foster
Chairman, Communist Party, USA

JOHN L. SPIVAK has done it again. His exposure of Father Coughlin in NEW MASSES will rank with the very best work Spivak has done along this line. Spivak, in uncovering Coughlin's activities, is doing the work that the Dies committee should do, if Dies were not a mouthpiece and protector of just such reactionary elements.

Robert W. Dunn
Director, Labor Research Association

CONGRATULATIONS. This series shows Jack at his best—as researcher, interviewer, analyst, and writer. Here are the goods on actual criminal un-Americanism, but Dies won't touch it. If Murphy's department doesn't do something it's objectively collaborating with Coughlin.

Upton Sinclair
Author

I SPENT my misguided youth writing dime novels, but I never wrote anything more exciting than the opening chapter of Spivak's story of Coughlin.

Isadore Muscovitz
Editor and Publisher, "Southern Jewish Weekly"

I HAVE just read your first installment of John L. Spivak's splendid article exposing the fraudulent antics of America's leading racketeer, Father Coughlin. Your publication of such material showing Coughlin as he really is to the American public is commendable and worthy. Coughlin's continued existence is a menace to the security and well being of our people. He lives on lies and falsehoods.

Continue to show him as he really is. The truth will relegate the "fake" behind bars.

I personally believe that the worst of all criminals are those who cravenly hide behind the white skirts of religion to conceal their own nefarious schemes.

next week . . .

JOHN L. SPIVAK REVEALS COUGHLIN'S CAMPAIGN TO SMASH ORGANIZED LABOR IN THE CITY OF DETROIT

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Literary Traditions

Bernard Smith's historical study of American literary ideas is a valuable contribution to the critical thought of our time.

FORCES IN AMERICAN CRITICISM, *by Bernard Smith. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $3.*

BERNARD SMITH'S study of the main currents in American literary criticism is far more than a summary of other men's ideas. It is, in its own right, a positive contribution to criticism, one of the best critical volumes of our turbulent and productive decade. Coming as it does at the very end of the decade, it reminds us how much has been accomplished since words like "escapism" and "propaganda" were first flung across the trenches. The maturing of social criticism, with respect to both scholarship and subtlety, is plainly illustrated in this book.

The greatest impact on critical thought in the thirties was made by the Marxists, and any fair-minded observer must, I think, agree with Smith that "The reviews that are being written today by the most popular of journalistic critics prove how much the social consciousness of the Marxists has affected contemporary American criticism." It is necessary to add, however, that quite a few of "the most popular of journalistic critics" were affected by Marxism neither permanently nor deeply. The war crisis inevitably produces a crisis of literary ideas, and it remains to be seen how much of the critical rapprochement survives the strain. Many critics have already indicated that they easily slip back to older moods and older formulas. The brief interim of good feeling is apparently over. Criticism will necessarily regain the central position which it occupied at the beginning of the decade. It will, therefore, be increasingly obliged to deal with first principles.

One of the chief virtues of Bernard Smith's study is that it defines the nature of certain of these principles by exploring their history. The view that literature and society are intimately connected, that neither can be fruitfully examined in isolation, is by now thoroughly familiar. Smith's thesis goes beyond this. He regards the history of men's attitudes toward the value and purpose of literature as a vital "missing link" in the relationship. Attitudes toward literature are historically rooted. Literary values are, consciously or unconsciously, integrated with social values, with class values. While the reciprocal relations of literary and social ideas are traced chronologically by Mr. Smith, he manages to cut across time boundaries in order to suggest major traditions or recurrent "forces" in American criticism with a view to determining their availability for contemporary practice.

The tradition of gentility, for example, is examined as the expression of a conservative leisure class, "the moral and social orthodoxy of the bourgeois who has, so to speak, been 'refined.'" This is true of every phase of its development, from the mercantile aristocracy at the beginning of the nineteenth century to the industrial aristocracy at the end of the century. Smith's objection to the doctrine of literary decorum, whether in Longfellow, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, or Paul Elmer More, is not a personal whim. By relating the current of ideas to the current of social reality, he is able to show that gentility and authoritarianism are as oppressive on the cultural level as they are on the political.

Similarly, the esthetic critics are not as "pure" as they profess to believe. "Esthetic criticism," Smith writes, "has always been an aristocratic exercise," and he presents imposing evidence. He does not, of course, suggest that criticism ignore formal problems; he merely points out that the exclusive concern with these problems stems from a social orientation. Amy Lowell and Ezra Pound could be as socially conscious and polemical as the radicals. James' aristocratic-esthetic emphasis could express itself in a condemnation of *Ethan Frome* on the ground that it contained "such simple creatures as hardly to be worth the pains the gifted writer has spent on them" and in a sneer at Ibsen as "ugly, common, hard, prosaic, bottomlessly bourgeois." Poe's "anti-thought" principle finds its logical culmination in the "autonomous" imagination of the Superrealists. The social basis of T. S. Eliot's estheticism has become embarrassingly clear to many of his "non-political" followers.

Smith goes on to define the meaning of Huneker's impressionism, Spingarn's expressionism, Mencken's "urban toryism." He analyzes other main currents: the provincial criticism of the eighteenth century, the transcendentalism of Emerson, the pessimistic idealism of Henry Adams, the energizing contribution of the frontier, the early socialism of Floyd Dell.

The soundest force in American criticism he finds exemplified by Whitman and Howells, by Randolph Bourne and Parrington. For these critics embody, to some degree, the values which Smith identifies as his own: a belief in the methods of science, in social equality and democracy. It is the tradition of a social realism which expresses the democratic ferment in American life. The "touch of life" which criticism requires, Smith writes, "consists in knowing human beings as they are and sympathizing with their efforts to achieve peace, freedom, and happiness." This quality, so conspicuously missing from the work of either the authoritarians or the esthetes, is an essential component of any valid critical effort. It needs to be supplemented by a sound historical method which is at once analytical and purposeful. The weakness of the liberal critics stems from their inability to face and interpret the facts of a dynamic society. Smith's account of Van Wyck Brooks' development is very penetrating in this respect. For whereas Brooks fathered the social movement in the twenties, his increasingly introspective and reminiscential temper, his "lightly melancholy adjustment that is akin to resignation," in the thirties marked a reluctance to develop his views in relation to a changed world. It has remained for the Marxists to accomplish this. While Smith is aware of certain weaknesses displayed by Marxist critics—which derive, I think it can be proved, from an incomplete grasp of Marxism—he is conscious of their strength. The Marxists, he observes, "have a philosophy of history to explain the present and guide them to a desirable future. They have a faith. They have a unifying idea. And therefore as critics of literature they have principles by which any work of art may be rationally interpreted and which may inspire and direct the creative impulse. He who cannot accept their principles is obliged to offer alternatives for which as much can be claimed and which are susceptible to being tested by reason and experience."

Bernard Smith is conscious of his responsibility to appraise the constructive insights, where they are discoverable, of critics with whom he is obviously not sympathetic—Henry James, for example. If individual studies, like that of Emerson, seem less satisfactory than others, if the final section will require revision as the perspective broadens, these seem like very minor defects in a book which gives a comprehensive and stimulating picture of literary ideas. It is an important contribution to our critical literature. SAMUEL SILLEN.

Ohio Manikin

INCREDIBLE ERA: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF WARREN GAMALIEL HARDING, *by Samuel Hopkins Adams. Houghton Mifflin Co. $3.*

MR. ADAMS adds little of value to the Harding record. He substantiates again the evidence of that President's abysmal ignorance, his slavishness to the Senate cabal that ran his administration, his pool-parlor joviality, his political mediocrity. Never possessing an idea that was not custombuilt for him, Harding was the perfect manikin fronting for the Ohio plunderbund. He never had a chance for the presidential nomination until Harry Daugherty broke the convention deadlock by

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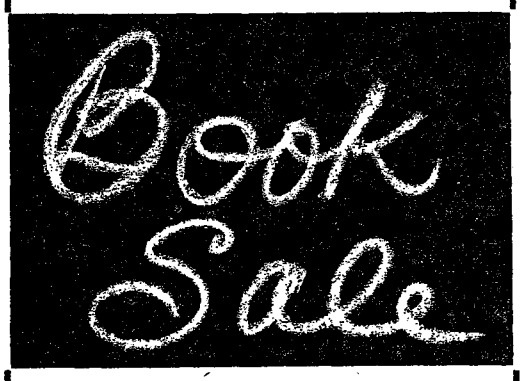

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selling his man to those upright sons of monopoly—Lodge, Brandegee, Harvey. In his elation all Harding could say when the deal was clinched was: "I feel like a man who goes in on a pair of eights and comes out with aces full." In office, Harding played the game as it was dictated from above. It was the only lesson he had learned well during his apprenticeship in the Senate. There were the tricksters and the crooks whom he appointed to high positions and who today remain as the only memorials to the blackest administration in the nation's history. When he was not strangling the English language in those beautifully incoherent speeches, he was playing poker or running away from his cranky wife or mourning his losses in the stock market. That was the magnificent fraud known as Warren Harding, President of the United States by grace of the Republican Party.

Still Mr. Adams says Harding was a good, kindly man—as though these qualities should redeem him before history. It is the kind of myth Harding biographers will perpetuate as long as history is evaluated in terms of personalities. In the book's title Harding's incumbency is described as an "incredible era." What were the forces in that era that generated the Harding politics which were the politics of his party? Was the Harding fiasco attributable to those who surrounded him because they were not lovable and kindly in their personal lives? The era is incredible only because it remains incomprehensible to Mr. Adams. Harding fulfilled the requirements demanded by a decadent ruling class. His ethics mirrored those of Wall Street. He faltered when he permitted the jackals to feed in the sunlight. Had he followed the quiet, polite ways of his vice president or his secretary of the treasury he would have avoided the aberrations which infuriated his masters. Mr. Adams offers only the faintest hints of the agricultural crisis, of the widespread labor unrest, of the new imperialist adventures which delineated the political atmosphere when Harding came to the throne. And I have yet to read a more shameful offense to the Negro people. If Harding, as it was rumored, had Negro blood, he "honorably and courageously lived down the handicap." The book is no better than the blatant stupidity of that remark. JOHN STUART.

American Movies

THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN FILM, *by Lewis Jacobs. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $4.50.*
AMERICA AT THE MOVIES, *by Margaret Thorp. Yale University Press. $2.75.*

STUDY of the American movies has matured if the medium itself has not. Lewis Jacobs' book is the most valuable factual study to date of the social, esthetic, and economic nature of the American movies, while Miss Thorp's work is a bantering and highly readable essay on the social consequences of Hollywood. The two books ideally supplement each other, although Mr. Jacobs' work is the basic one, a mine of well organized data proceeding chronologically throughout the forty year history of the "art-industry" in America. Miss Thorp is content to draw her conclusions from the film of the last few years, which is exactly the weakness of *The Rise of the American Film.* She goes into the movies and fashion, the glamour racket and censorship in a diverting fashion, while Mr. Jacobs has little space for these matters.

The Rise of the American Film includes chapters on the technicians who invented and enlarged the art, such as Melies; the personal impacts of Edwin S. Porter, D. W. Griffith, Chaplin, and Disney; chapters on the techniques and careers of important directors; and finally the book places this art in its proper context of big business chicanery and monopoly. As the singular or typical films appear in the story the author has outlined the plots and related them to the temper and social trends of the times. Mr. Jacobs has not ruled out the necessary foreign influences on the American film such as the early Soviet and German pioneers.

These books will do much to advance the true knowledge of the film and help destroy in wider circles of the public the ignorance of the social importance of the screen induced by the notion that the movies are merely entertainment. Hollywood's propaganda mills have worked overtime trying to hide the incalculable social power of the movies and their function in destroying, confirming, or making mass ideas. Both authors have pierced the caterwaul of publicity to bring forth the real facts about the movies. Examples of the amorality of finance capital abound in the brawling movie industry. Dog has eaten dog in Hollywood with the violence of a Popeye cartoon. Wall Street has sacked the place with the efficiency of a Polish pogrom and the next year Wall Street has crawled home without its pants.

But the old osmosis of common truth and reality forever plagues the monopoly screen. When it seems that everything is peace and contentment in the movie palace, the audience lapping sugar out of hand, suddenly the box office, that dreadful plebiscite, will take a dive and all the mighty brains will convene to figure out a remedy. Last year it was the disingenuous campaign, "Movies Are Your Best Entertainment," which made its own poetic acrostic, "maybe." Standing up in print and yelling "Supercolossal Wolf!" still didn't scare the folks. They didn't know how to say it but they wanted some reality. Groan as they will at the injustice of it, the movie producers are still chained to that queer democracy, the box office. This polling place is open every day and it takes enormous hordes of wardheelers to round up the vote. If, instead of issuing bulls against subversive and immoral subjects, the Legion of Decency would require attendance at certain ennobling films, Joe Breen would solve the root paradox of the monopoly movies, and cause the withering away of sinful lures.

But there are plenty of people in Hollywood and out of it who can make and consume real pictures. The influence of healthy mass ideas has been hastened by the organization of the

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articulate audience in Film Audiences for Democracy, and in the useful guidance of the National Board of Review. On the production end the government, Frontier Films, and a number of other progressive outfits are making mature and responsible pictures about real life which inevitably affect Hollywood itself. They are practically stifled by the fact that the monopoly also controls the theaters and the sources of finance, but these brave independents are the laboratory of the future adulthood of the movies.

Miss Thorp and Mr. Jacobs have contributed books that will help this trend immensely. They have looked at Hollywood and it has not been a Potemkin visit. Both books are well illustrated with stills. If movie audiences can get hold of facts like these which provide equipment for critical moviegoing, the habits of Hollywood producers will not endure. JAMES DUGAN.

German Fascism

GERMANY PUTS THE CLOCK BACK. *Revised edition by Edgar Ansel Mowrer. Morrow & Co. $2.50.*

ONE of the first analyses of German fascism in the English language came off Edgar Ansel Mowrer's highpowered typewriter. Written in the months before Hitler was handed power, it is one of the most thoroughly historical studies we have: a skillful dissection of each malignancy that drained the post-war German organism. The spineless weakness and fatal opportunism of the Social Democracy; diabolical demagogy playing upon an inferiority-complex nationalism; the pressure of a worldwide economic crisis upon a war-ruined economy; the gamble of East Elbian landowners and Rhineland industrialists who hoped to seduce the following which Hitler himself has seduced: the whole story makes doubly fascinating reading today. At times, Mowrer's discussion of the inner dynamics of the Nazi movement anticipates Hermann Rauschning's study, all the more remarkable since Rauschning had six years of personal experience with it.

In the republication of the volume, three chapters have been added, "bringing it up to date." While they cannot mar the intrinsic value of the original, they are nonetheless very disappointing. In Mowrer's analysis, Chamberlain sees the light; Daladier repents; having given way to Hitler, the tory crowd suddenly decides to resist. Since he favored that resistance long ago, Mowrer is pleased that the rulers have decided to follow his advice. But the keen Yankee newspaperman whose supercharged prose illuminated the complex chicanery of post-war Germany fails completely to analyze the character of this resistance to fascism, its implications for Germany and the future of Europe. The Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact is dismissed in the most superficial cliches: Mowrer muffs the fact that world history turned a corner when the Russians accepted the desperate Nazi bid for improved relations. Thus a good book is damaged by its postscript. It took discernment, knowledge, and thought to write the book; the postscript is borrowed from the shabbiest passages of yesterday's editorials.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

Neglected Artist

AND HE SAT AMONG THE ASHES: A BIOGRAPHY OF LOUIS M. EILSHEMIUS, *by William Schack. American Artists Group. $3.*

RALPH BLAKELOCK went mad; John La Farge stained windows; Winslow Homer, when he was finally recognized, was a bitter old man and had no desire to see his name in print again. Louis Eilshemius was born of wealthy people, which was an advantage of sorts, but it didn't do him much good. It wasn't until he had put his brushes down, too old to paint, an invalid consumed with a great hatred, that he received any notice. The biography of Eilshemius is the story of our nineteenth-century painters, the great ones whose pictures were auctioned off for $20,000 (for the benefit of the dealers) while they starved, or were already dead, or in insane asylums.

Eilshemius was discouraged by the provincial approach to the national arts, broken by the private (capitalist) control of the galleries. He asked the government to provide art jobs for the artists; he called for municipal museums. Neglected, beaten, completely frustrated, he turned to psychopathic compensations. It is unfortunate that the energetic Eilshemius—still energetic for all his confinement—could not see the healthier channels of collective activity, wherein he might have discovered some return for his sincere work, and some happiness.

OWEN BURKE.

Far from the Battle

AMERICA'S CHANCE OF PEACE, *by Duncan Aikman and Blair Bolles. Doubleday, Doran & Co. $1.*

THIS is a discussion of America's position today compared with that of 1914 in terms of preparation for this war, the accumulation of raw materials, the control of finances, the hope of neutrality, the attitude toward propaganda. It is the sort of job which capable newspapermen take a month off to assemble: spry, factual, informative; sometimes sparkling in manner, but more often too strained for effect to be wholly effective. The major thesis is an exposition of those distinctions between 1939 and 1914 in which our chance of peace resides. The trouble is that our chance of peace cannot be estimated without answering two questions: What are the issues of the war in Europe? What forces are operating within the United States that are divided on the issues of the war?

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world capitalist system. Thus, there cannot be a unified attitude in the United States toward this war! Our own nation is divided into classes, some of which have stakes in maintaining the world capitalist order, others of which can only maintain themselves by its overthrow. Without appreciating such objective facts in the domestic picture, no one can estimate our chance of peace.

Aikman and Bolles are not writing ivory tower literature; but they sound as though they work in a penthouse. Far from being above the battle, they do not seem to realize that the battle exists, or where the battlefields are. J. S.

Ruling-class Southerner

BOSS MAN, *by Louis Cochran. Caxton Printers, Ltd. Caldwell, Idaho. $2.50.*

ARTISTICALLY on the slick side, this book seeks to make fictional use of such information, new to the printed page, as appeared in Hortense Powdermaker's sociological work, *After Freedom.*

Louis Cochran presents this information in the end only as a background for the story of Lije Smith, who from a nameless beginning became boss of a Mississippi Delta town. This would be no objection if the character were the explanation, the personalization of the sociological facts. But he is not. Lije is a frustrated man, one who has labored to attain the way of life of the faded Southern aristocracy and found it empty; a man who loved and lost one woman, only to marry another and find her barren. He is ruthless in his exploitation of his tenants; contemptuous of the whites for their degraded condition, and paternal toward his "good" Negroes; and all this, Cochran would have us believe, because of his unfulfilled desire for a son. This we cannot accept. The South's condition is not due to isolated individuals, for no matter how powerful an individual may become, he is dependent upon others with similar interests; it is this group's consciousness of itself as a class—its links lead to Wall Street—that is responsible.

The tragedy of the South lies not in the personal frustrations of members of its ruling class, but in the denial of human personality, in the waste of human talent, energy, and life, for which it has become a symbol. The main fault of this book is that while the author has sought to make use of material new to American fiction, his conception of the people whom his facts most concern remains stereotyped. Either he fails to understand his material, or he has compromised; and compromise works to the negation of literature as in the South it has worked to the negation of democracy.

Boss Man contains an incident of a white sharecropper protesting his exploitation; another of a Negro exerting his will in revolt. Had Cochran understood the historical significance of such incidents, and presented it, he would have made a valuable contribution to American writing and to democracy.

RALPH ELLISON.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Revolution in the Wheatfields

Alexander Dovzhenko's film "Shors" is the story of the medical student who led the Russian Revolution in the Ukraine. A beautiful Soviet movie.

NIKOLAI SHORS was a great man born of the revolution—a twenty-three-year-old medical student who organized the resistance of the Ukrainian people against the Germans, landlords, and stupid Don Cossack chiefs who plundered the south of Russia in 1917-19. Ukrainian regionalism is the most pronounced national cultural strain that has so far shown in the Soviet film, and Alexander Dovzhenko is its leading director. Thus, when Stalin suggested that Shors was a great subject for a film, Dovzhenko was the man to make his revolutionary biography. *Shors* is a film of grave beauty and warmth and power, in which the earthy qualities of the Ukraine, the rough peasant wit, the panoramic seas of wheat or the prairies under snow, the opaque enormities of sky, and the hardy farming people enter the picture to form its unique regional quality.

The political character of *Shors* is sharp and well developed in the struggle of the far-seeing youthful commander to guide his impulsive Cossack lieutenant, Bozhenko, into understanding the responsibilities of the kind of war fought by Bolsheviks. Bozhenko wants to lay right into them, never retreat, take immediate revenge regardless of consequences, shoot the prisoners, and horsewhip his aides when they get out of line. Boisterous, cognac-drinking Bozhenko is a figure of transition—the peasant who knows the rightness of the revolution but has not learned its techniques. Shors is the intellectual with a decisiveness of granite and the imagination to handle all sorts of people. Dovzhenko has created, in Shors and Bozhenko, two of the most mature character studies that the screen has seen. In the playing of E. Samoilov as Shors and I. Skuratov as Bozhenko the revolutionary heroes are portrayed in three dimensions.

Anyone who is still puzzled about what happened when the Red Army met the Germans outside of Warsaw will do well to see what happened when the Ukrainian partisans met the Germans in 1918. Shors sends out makeshift diplomats to fraternize with the German rank and file who are seething with the news from home of the German revolution. The envoys fail and finally the entire Bolshevik army and population march with banners, singing, up to the German barbed wire. Shors confronts the German commander, shoves him out of the way, and the two armies embrace. Shors reviews the German troops, gives them wheat and lard, and sends them home free men. Things didn't exactly go this far in Poland but I think you get the idea.

The photographic conception of the film, and the magnificent musical score by the leading Ukrainian composer, Kabalevsky, played by the Ukrainian State Symphony, are matters of such beauty that I fairly staggered from the theater. Dovzhenko's cameraman, Ekelchik, is fond of atmospheric effects, the morning mists in a little pond as Shors' cavalry clatters through, veils of dust or shellsmoke, or flying snow, and great petroleum-colored skies hovering over the bleached wheat. The trucking shot, in which the camera travels along, has been used with great ingenuity. One such shot, for pure kinetic excitement, has never been equaled. The camera runs along a snow-covered road, past a file of slow-moving sleighs, going in the same direction. Between the camera and the sleighs hard-riding cavalrymen come faster than both, in the same direction. This triple stream of movements produces a tremendously exuberant effect. The panning shot, in which the camera swivels on a stationary position, is employed in the opening battle in a field of enormous sunflowers and later in the wheat, with wildly plunging horses, shell-bursts, hand-to-hand fighting, and the sunflowers whipped about in the midst of the violent melee. Dovzhenko illustrates that a new dimension can be given to what is essentially dance composition by the imaginative use of the panning shot. The camera in a fixed shot contributes one of the hair-raising Dovzhenko ideas when an ice-covered river surface is seen from a great height. Silhouettes of fleeing Petlura soldiers, tiny and jet-black, struggle madly across the white screen.

As film music the Kabalevsky score, often accompanied by choral singing, is the finest since Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* music. One sound trick by Dovzhenko indicates that, like Hitchcock, he relishes the psychological potentialities of sound. A Polish commander frantically tries to telephone for aid as the Red partisans fight his men in the corridors of a castle. The Polish officer can make no connection and he puts his hands over his ears to shut out the horrid sounds of defeat. The sound track becomes silent. He takes his hands off his ears and the sound track resumes.

With the great scope of the subject—two years of fighting over great expanses, with a half dozen armies to account for—Dovzhenko might easily have made an empty "epic." He has not done so because his fine sense of character and humor permeates the picture. There are a dozen comic episodes in *Shors,* and the amazing sequence of the wedding party suddenly becoming entangled in the

GERMAN INVADERS *about to massacre Ukrainian peasants for expropriating land in the new Dovzhenko picture, "Shors."*

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fighting is a superb idea. I saw *Shors* twice and shall have to go several times more to look into the details of the picture. There is enough motion picture art in this single film to serve as a textbook on how to do it.

Alexander Dovzhenko, born in 1894, comes of Ukrainian peasant stock himself. He improvised an education and became a school teacher. He fought throughout the Ukrainian Revolution and turned, after the war, to political cartooning and painting. He studied art in Berlin while attached to the Soviet diplomatic corps, but abandoned his promising career in art in 1926. He went to the Odessa cinema studios, knowing nothing about films, but quickly caught on. His first film, a melodramatic subject called *Pouch of the Diplomatic Courier,* gained him notice. He developed rapidly and produced four of the greatest Soviet films: *Soil,* on collective farming; *Ivan,* in which one of his Ukrainian farm boys learns how to become an industrial worker on the Dnieperstroy hydroelectric project; *Arsenal,* a political polemic against the reactionary Ukrainian nationalists; and *Frontier,* about Soviet pioneers in the eastern taiga.

Dovzhenko was attending the ceremonies in the Kremlin when the Vassiliev brothers were being awarded the Order of Lenin for *Chapayev.* Stalin nudged the director and said Dovzhenko had a Chapayev in his own parts—Nikolai Shors. The work on the picture consumed three years, with a tremendous amount of direct research in interviews with veterans of the southern campaigns. Dovzhenko is an energetic, lovable fellow, who works like a tornado once he has grasped his subject. He describes his working methods in a quotation from one of his idols, the painter Courbet. Courbet was once asked by a lady visitor, "What are you thinking when you work?" "Lady," said the painter, "I don't think. I'm just excited!" Dovzhenko is able to infect his fellow workers with this enthusiasm, as may be seen in the tremendous vitality of *Shors.*

Dovzhenko is at present in the new Western Ukraine, almost in time to catch the last long shots of the departing Polish landlords as they scram over the horizon. *Shors* is being shown amidst demonstrations to the newly freed Ukrainians. Dovzhenko is busy making documentaries in the new Soviet regions. If he can reconstruct a revolution as magnificently as he has done in *Shors,* what will he do with the real thing under his tripod?

JAMES DUGAN.

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tact with simple working people, by her love for one of them, particularly as her lover himself suffers the loss of his brother. Notable for its genuine warmth, the novel achieved a subtle integration of personal reconstitution against the background of significant social motif.

Plays derived from novels always suffer a handicap: they must do more than reproduce the printed page; must achieve the level of authentic drama. Always difficult, this is especially arduous in the instance of novels where the action is almost wholly confined to psychological levels. Sidney Kingsley has been singularly successful in his new play, *The World We Make,* at the Guild. Subtracting nothing from the genuine mood of the book, he creates theater without becoming theatrical.

The devices are unusual; but not at all as artificial or sensational as he has been guilty of in the past or the comment of some critics would have it. For example, in the prologue the playwright is assisted by Harry Horner's unusual set: the walls of the Greendale Sanitorium are constructed of a translucent plastic. The movement of nurses and visitors in the anteroom thereby achieves a sickly exaggeration which emphasizes perfectly the growing unclarity of Virginia McKay's mind.

In the novel, Virginia seeks to find refuge in a dress factory. Sidney Kingsley has substituted a steam laundry: real steam, flatwork presses, mangles, jangles, tumult, the rough and sweaty repartee of exhausted workers harried by an impoverished boss. The effect is breathtaking; only for a moment is the illusion overperfect and the play halted.

Befriended by a young laundry worker, Virginia benefits by the therapy of normal relations with ordinary people. In the grimy tenement, she takes to ordering his humble room. She shares the pittance of joy with the Polish family next door, the Italian indigent and his puppy who live upstairs, the couple who are going to have a baby. The playwright achieves a contemporary note by employing the outbreak of the war (references to Hitler and to Mussolini but nothing about Chamberlain and Daladier), thus amplifying the characterization of several minor characters. Just as Virginia is being overwhelmed by the external forces of hate (the tenement children innocently mimic a bombardment in the corridors) her lover's brother suffers the fate of her own. She regains the grip on her own mind and eventual liberation from unbalance by participation in his suffering.

Margo gives her difficult role a superb performance: her body achieves a luminous coordination of physical and mental tension. Herbert Rudley, as the man who reintegrates her love, has charm and strength. His class-conscious brother, Joseph Pevney, and Thelma Schnee and her stage-husband, James O'Rear, give able supporting performances. *The World We Make* stands on sure ground as the second important new play of this season, now that the Group Theater has decided to continue *Thunder Rock.* JOSEPH STAROBIN.

A Counterfeit Kern

Jerome Kern's and Oscar Hammerstein's "Very Warm for May."

"VERY Warm for May" by Oscar Hammerstein, II, and Jerome Kern is a musical comedy whose melody is carried by the violins. It has a competent cast, a good book idea, but the important ingredients are missing. The jokes are strictly on the bad minstrel show side and the music and lyrics are stinko. This I know very well is sheer blasphemy and Phoebus Apollo will strike me tone deaf for life, but I will gladly eat one of Minnelli's wigs upon the verdict of history even if it only gets NM a mention in the *New Yorker's* "Hungry Critic" dept.

The sets are tasteful, but they don't bang the eye, except the barn scene. The dancing, with the exception of the early jitterburg chorus, is as flat as the Kern music.

Eve Arden, Hiram Sherman, and William Torpey do as fine pieces of acting as you could imagine with such material.

In the second act there is introduced a novelty orchestra that has all the zip of Adrian Rollini's trio on a 9 a.m. program. Well, the contrast was so great that the whole audience started tapping its collective toe. I'm sure that even if that solid recipient J. Alligator Dugan were there, he would have smiled benignly.

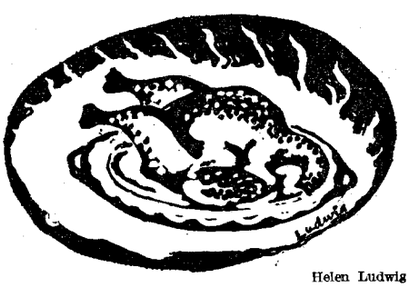
Jerome Kern has done some nice scores. This isn't one. The cast works hard but it is no use. The day of the overstuffed musical comedy seems to be gone.

AGNES DAY.

Shostakovitch Octet

The New York Sinfonietta loses its leader.

NEWS that Max Goberman, the brilliant twenty-eight-year-old violinist and conductor of the New York Sinfonietta, has joined the Ballet Russe of Covent Garden and is leaving to conduct in Australia, reminds us of several little known recordings bearing his imprimatur. Besides a performance with Szigeti on Columbia, Goberman with eight strings from the Sinfonietta is responsible for an audacious and masterful performance of two Shostakovitch octets on Timely records. The young Soviet composer is almost alone among contemporaries in making major music for the string octet, and the dissonances and complex



Helen Ludwig

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ALFRED GOLDSTEIN, popular political analyst, discusses the week's news, Sunday, December 3, 8:30 P.M. Auspices Workers School, 35 East 12 Street, second floor. Admission 20 cents.

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eight-part harmonies of these pieces are usually left discreetly alone by careful ensembles. But the Sinfonietta attacks them with the verve of hot jazz players and, only once, on the screaming second side, do they make a slight departure from the score. This is a phenomenal batting average, I was told by a cellist familiar with the playing tasks of the compositions. Above these technical matters the average listener will find the octets an enduring item for a collection, and sense the loss in Goberman's departure.

BARNABY HOTCHKISS.

Dali's Ballet

"Bacchanale," performed by the Ballet Russe.

"BACCHANALE" is not only the latest but the strangest ballet Massine and his Monte Carlo troupe have danced for the chauffeured trade at the Metropolitan, with Dali providing the scenario, the scenery, and most of the work's oddity.

Building on Wagner's sensuous Venusberg music, against the background of cabinets, a swan jaggedly torn through its middle and a Raphaelian temple on greensward, Dali indulges in a display of dwarfs, homosexuals, psychopathics, umbrella men, nymphs, cupids, satyrs, fauns, and just ordinary madmen. The purpose, bewildering or amusing, satiric, sympathetic, or just non-committal, is to expose the "deliriously confused brain" of Louis II of Bavaria. It's certainly the maddest (and perhaps funniest) performance you can ever expect to get from a Hurok company.

Ghost Town, the final new ballet offered by the troupe, musical setting by Richard Rodgers, is the story of a gold-mining town (circa 1849) which gets lost in the hoops and skirts of the ballerinas.

The Ballet's prize package of the season is unquestionably Dali's provocative *Bacchanale.*

OWEN BURKE.

John Heliker

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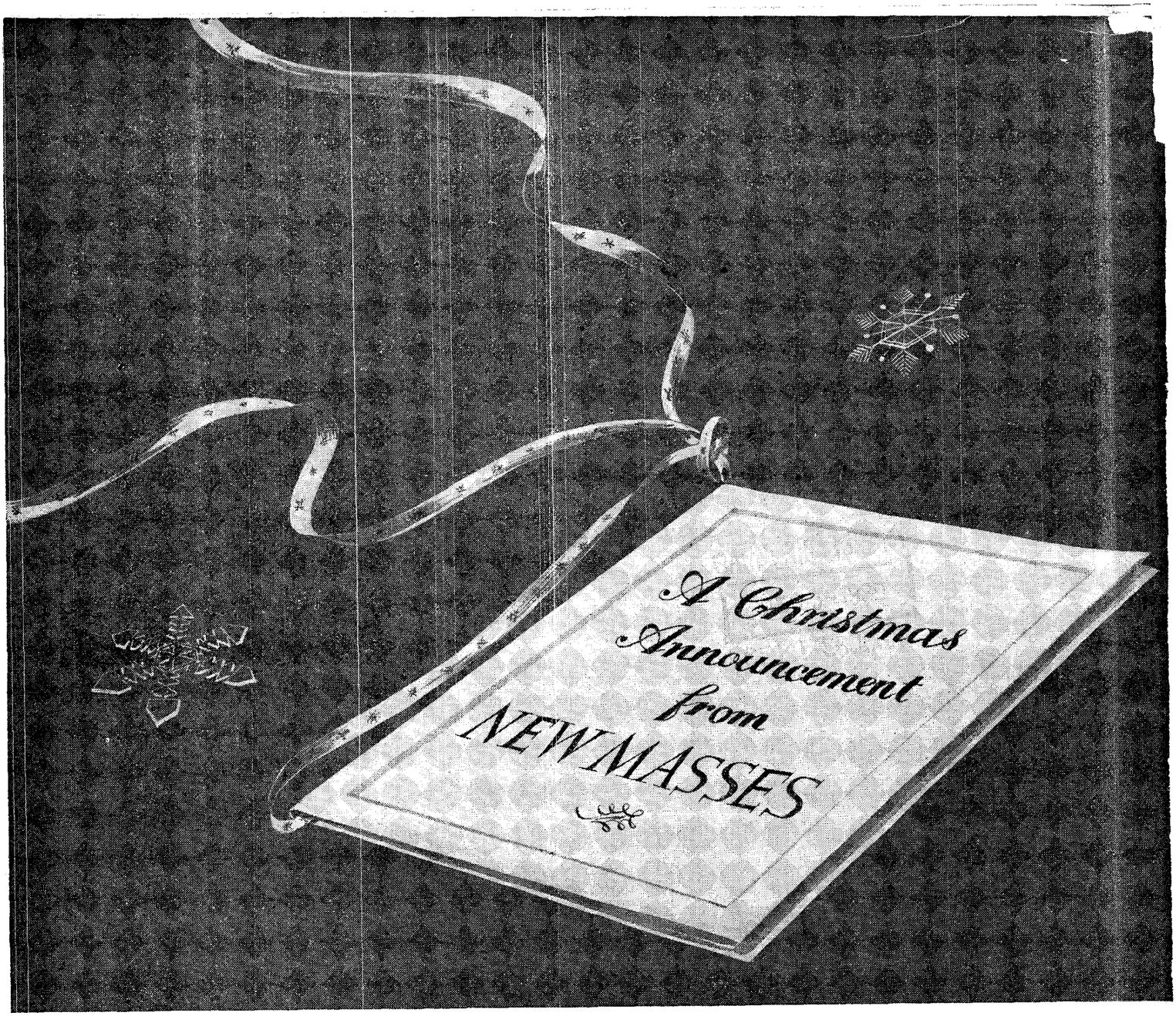

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